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## Oceanside85

Interview by AU Editorial

### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with and what are you most infamous for?

Chelsea Owen: Hey I'm Oceanside85, I like long walks on the beach, candle-lit dinners, and retro synth jams. My real name is Chelsea Owen, and I guess I'm most infamous for being a frontwoman for a couple psychobilly bands that were around a while back. A four-piece called Haddonfield, we played around Victoria and Vancouver back in 2008 and 2009. I'm back, although I have since lost my pompadour. I'm now here to share and spread the word of synth and synth-related music. Praise be to the synth gods.

### AU: Tell us about darksynth! What makes this genre special? Is this a growing subculture in Victoria?

CO: Darksynth is distorted synth bass, crunchy

electric guitar, and thunderous percussion. It's a gritty, pulsing, grimy, ominous demon, slaying its way through your eardrums. It's music with metal, and EDM undertones. It's a growing subculture around the globe, and I'd love it to keep growing here in Victoria. I think metal fans would dig it, also industrial and aggrotech fans. There are many similar elements incorporated in darksynth.

### AU: What is the difference between darksynth and synthwave?

CO: Synthwave itself is an umbrella term, and under it are many subgenres, but basically synthwave is shimmering synths, arping basses, a fusion of an old memory and a dream of the future. Much synthwave has aesthetics of the Miami strip palm trees 80s retro style, and in the same breath, futuristic visions and dreams of alternate retro realities, mostly because the people making it were either born in that era or lived through it, or are inspired by the 80s synthesizer greats such as John Carpenter and Vangelis. The many 80s movies that had

synths were a big influence to many of the synthwave producers. Such subgenres include futurefunk, synthpop, chillwave, outrun, cyberpunk, and darksynth. However, darksynth is now coming into its own and breaking away into its own genre, as it used to be under the synthwave umbrella, it now has grown and evolved in its own way and deserves its own full genre distinction. My friend Iron Skullet wrote an interesting article on this: <https://ironskullet.com/2018/05/14/why-darksynth-deserves-its-own-genre/>

"The need for a separate classification may sound odd or surprising, since the darkened side of synthwave emerged just five or six years ago and has typically been easy to group within the main genre. Even as recently as early 2017, nearly all creations in the grittier, more aggressive darksynth style could be roughly contained under the synthwave moniker. For example, it was never a stretch to include albums like Perturbator's *I Am the Night*, 20SIX Hundred's *The Cold Rise from Sleep*, and Cluster Buster's *Total Terror* alongside releases from Waveshaper and Lost Years. Times change, however, and few things are changing more rapidly than the shape and character of darksynth... Increasingly, darksynth creators have cast aside the 80s nostalgia and bright melodies of synthwave music in favor of wildly distorted synth bass, crunchy electric guitar, and thunderous percussion..."

### AU: As a musician, what appeals to you about playing this style of music?

CO: I love the aggression of darksynth. I very much want to express all aspects of myself, dark and light. The vibe and energy of darksynth is entrancing. I feel creating synthwave and darksynth is a great balance for artistic expression, plus it's fucking brutal. It gets me hyped up and my blood pumping.

### AU: Tell us about your project specifically, what is it all about? What can we expect to hear on your new album, *Absolution*?

CO: Oceanside85 is retro dimensions translated through audio crystallized in time. A dimension of my own creation, every aspect of myself expressed in music. All the realities and some alternate ones, too. I create synthwave because I am synthwave. Synthwave is a genre that has 80s and 90s influence. I was an 80s kid and when I found this genre, something became fulfilled. 85 represents my favourite retro year. Oceanside is my favourite place to chill. This project is 100 percent random. That's because I make whatever comes, not trying to direct myself in any certain direction. I make synthwave, darksynth, chill lo-fi, vaporwave, and tropical music. Right now, I have a second synthwave album coming out this July, called *Neon Dreams*. As well as a chill EP called *Clouds* coming in April, and most recently, *Absolution*, that was released in October. *Absolution* is my first darksynth album. I will be building on these styles as I go, adding to the tapestry of Oceanside85. I hope I have a little something for everyone. When you listen to *Absolution*, expect to hear auditory vengeance and atheme for battle. Stay tuned, 'cause it's going to get interesting.

### AU: Does your new album explore any particular themes or topics?

CO: Yes, there's definitely some raw emotions on it. Themes of empowerment and taking charge of

## VICTORIAS LOCALS ONLY

your own destiny, rebuking anyone or thing in your way, as well as social commentary on power corruption and greed. It's an album that's been building in me for years. It's the first time I've let it all go, all the emotions that were pent-up. I ripped open scars and acknowledged the demons, and it has been so empowering letting it out and feeling released from the anxiety it was creating. I've been through a lot as so many have, everybody is battling every day. There are some who may not have any support and I want them to know I support them. We are all warriors we are strong and we will rise. Just as steel gets tempered in the fire, we emerge stronger from phases of adversity. There is a lot in this world that we need to fight for. Rise through the flames that have tempered your soul and made you strong. Keep fighting the battles of life and rage against the dying of the light.

### AU: How has the reception of your album been since its release?

CO: I've been hearing good things. It's so cool to hear when someone says your song really spoke to them. I've had a couple of reviews with some beautiful words written. I'm super thankful to them for taking the time to listen.

### AU: You mentioned there is a lot of crossover with metal subculture, can you elaborate on that? What do metalheads enjoy about the darksynth genre?

CO: I think it's crossing over well with metal fans because most of the darksynth producers I know have had some kind of background playing metal, whether that is being in a band or they are metal fans and have been inspired by metal. I think darksynth combines really well with aspects of metal, like for instance producer Shredder1984. As Iron Skullet wrote, "[Shredder1984] intuitively generates the feeling of 80s-era thrash and death metal with a strictly electronic delivery." Similarly, Dance with the Dead adds in real guitars and shreds your face right off fusing metal and synth perfectly in their compositions.

### AU: Do you perform live? And if so, where can we see you play next?

CO: Yes I do. Feb 22nd, come see me at The Copper Owl playing with Dj Trever and Mr.Zoth. I'll be performing *Absolution* live for the first time. Come out and party, it's going to be killer. On April 12th I'll be playing The Verboden festival, I'll be at the Astoria in Vancouver. I'm stoked to be a part of the event.

### AU: What should we know about you as an artist that we don't already?

CO: I'm here and I'm ready to transport you into another dimension and timeline. Hold on to your ass.

### AU: Any final words for our readers?

CO: Thanks for checking me out. Come out to a show and lets make a synth pit! Neon warriors and demons and time travel, oh my! And last but not least, thank you so much for the interview Absolute Underground, you fucking legend. Stay rad and jam on!

[www.oceanside85.com](http://www.oceanside85.com)

<http://oceanside85.bandcamp.com>

PHOTO CREDIT: Shane Lange, Factotum Photography



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## Wolfbrood

Interview by Roger the Shrubber

**Absolute Underground: Who are you and what are you most famous for?**

Daniel Citynski: I am the Vargafetch - an apparition in the shape of a wolf who comes before a person as an omen that indicates their death. If one is to see me in front of them, it means that the barrier between life and death has become obscured, and that the dead are present, and watching. I front the band Wolfbrood, and I sing to you of the fates of men long gone, and of cultures long since forgotten. I am not famous... for except in rare circumstances, the dead do not speak.

**AU: Tell us about the band - who are you and how did you form?**

DC: It is said that in the beginning, there were two people. Ask was one, who was a man, and whose name meant Ash-Tree. Embla was a woman, and she bore children with him. Her name meant Elm-Tree, or Vine. They were given life by the gods, and we are their descendants. Those certain descendants of Ash and Elm who would form Wolfbrood banded together to play and sing songs because we remember those old stories, and would fain hear them retold and told again.

**AU: Can you describe your style of music for those of us who've never heard you? Do your lyrics explore any particular themes or topics?**

DC: We play folk instruments in traditional styles, but the songs themselves are not traditional, and

the rousing cacophony that Wolfbrood produces should hardly be called 'folk.' I once heard someone call us 'Norse Power Folk' and it pleased me. We come to you to sing of what we now call northern Europe, and tell stories of the people who must have lived at such a time as when men looked to the grey seas and saw longships sail across the fjords, laden with loot and slaves, being greeted in ports home and away by horns echoing across mountain tops to signal the homecoming of warriors who gained might and fame abroad, slaying and burning their way into the hearts of the fearful and vulnerable, and transferring the hoarded wealth of the decadent south into the hands of the proud and eager northmen. And we sing still.

**AU: Have you played any live shows yet? If so, how was it, and if not, what do you have coming up that you can tell us about?**

DC: Not all Wolfbrood shows are for human ears. The songs have been ringing through remote mountaintops and forest ravines for many years, heard from a cross-breeze bellowed out from over accordion, fiddle and hand drum. But yeah, we played Chi Pig's 56th birthday at SBC in October and Pub 340 has heard us more than a few times. And they will again.

**AU: What do you hope people will take away from your live performance?**

DC: Let people take what they may. We sing in remembrance of our ancestors, and do honour to them in recognition of their culture, which was passed down to us.

**AU: Do you plan to release any music or do any touring in the new year?**

DC: Yes and yes. This is the waxing year for Wolfbrood. 2019 will hear much of us.

**AU: What are your long term goals for this band?**

DC: Then Vargafetch recited a stave:

"The High One's Words

State clearly so:

That a man's fame may never die,  
Though perish his herds,  
His kin to th'mound go,  
Fame lives though still he'll lie."

**AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?**

DC: Clearly we're into Norse culture, folklore and myth, and there is that ever-present niggling lingerance of white nationalists and white supremacists using our traditional symbols and subject matter both historically and in modern times. Let me say unequivocally: fuck these dumb, backwards people and their stupid-ass conspiracy theories. Get out of our scene, stop misappropriating our culture to represent the dumpster fires that are your racist political opinions, and go be shitty losers on your

## VANCOUVER VENGEANCE

own time. We have no time for you. Do not assume that just because we sing about vikings and stuff that we have anything in common with you. We don't. You're awful. Get fucked.

**AU: Where can we keep up to date with your news and tunes?**

DC: Facebook, Bandcamp, YouTube, Twitter. As of right now, in that order.

Watch for official online material in January/February.

**AU: Any final words for our readers?**

DC: Hail to the Wolf Clan!

[facebook.com/Wolfbrood-1929261187167180/](https://facebook.com/Wolfbrood-1929261187167180/)

PHOTO SOURCE: Wolfbrood

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## Punish

Interview by AU Editorial

Photo Credit Greg Corfield

### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with and what are you most infamous for?

Donnie Black: Donnie Black, drummer and sometimes bassist for Punish. Infamous for being the Mayor of Nudiville. I've ran Victoria's only strip club for the past quarter century, with 11 of those years being sober. That's a freakin' miracle.

### AU: When and how did Punish first get started?

DB: Kirk (guitar/vocals), myself and Jason Walton decided to resurrect Jason's old band, Malevolence. A few months into our rehearsing, Adel auditioned as our lead guitarist. In early 1992 we recorded demo tapes over at Fiasco Brothers Studio in New Westminster. A year later, Kirk, Adel and I decided to carry on as a trio called Purge. Three months into those rehearsals, I was invited back to drum with my old band, and Terry James was my replacement. Kirk, Adel and Terry then changed the band name to Punish, recording their first and only CD, *State Of Grace* in 1995.

### AU: What brought about the resurrection?

DB: The actual resurrection of Punish started in

December 2011. I had booked a Pantera tribute band to play my New Years Eve party, and needed an opening act. The three of us have always remained friends, and still share the same rehearsal space from back in 1991. There have been some long breaks, but those two guys are definitely the most consistent thing in my life. In 2018, we decided to play more gigs.

### AU: Who's in the band and what would it say on their Tinder profiles?

DB: First off, I'd like to hope none of us would ever use that shit, but I'll see what I can do:



KIRK, 19 (yeah right)  
less than a mile away,  
Active just now  
Aggressive screamer,  
Rhythm guitar,  
Scotchfest innovator,  
Motorcyclist  
ADEL, 19 (yeah right)  
3 miles away, Active 1  
hour ago

Logical, Lead guitar, Computer tech guy, BMW driver

TERRY, 19 (yeah right)

next door, Currently idle

Excited, Punish drummer sometimes, Fast talker, Donates his body to science whenever he plays

DONNIE, 19 (yeah right)

down hall on the right, Hyperactive

Punish drummer and sometimes bassist, Zon Son of Thor, Reverend, Purveyor of flesh

### AU: What is Punish all about?

DB: For me, Punish is about taking my aggressions out on the drums, while hearing Kirk's vocals help exorcize my demons (and there's a lot of those). I'd describe our music as Slayer meets Pantera with Carcass' *Swan Song* sprinkled onto my style of playing. When Terry drums, it's a little different because he and I have two different styles of drumming. He's a different kind of nuts than I am.

### AU: What are some of the songs about?

DB: A lot of our songs sound pretty angry. Our songs in a nutshell: betrayal, deceit, power, and fast cars.

### AU: What's new in the Punish camp?

DB: We just started to gig regularly after what seemed like only gigging every five years. The plan is to record all the songs that we haven't recorded previously and make them available for people to chew on. Kirk and I have a ton of video footage from our early days together, so I'd like us to do some sort of retrospective video.

### AU: Do you always have strippers on stage?

DB: Those aren't strippers! Actually, I've always had 'assistants' on stage with my bands. They serve us drinks, as well as help us giveaway free shit. One of the girls is an actual nurse. So if there's ever any problems, she's our fixer.

### AU: What's the metal scene like in Victoria?

DB: The metal scene is alright but I find that none of the local guitarists want to take it to the next level and become a guitar god. If you know of any, have them contact Zon: Son Of THOR.

### AU: What are your plans for X-Mas this year?

DB: I host an annual Drunk Santa promotion at the bar. I'm the biggest Santa without any f\*\*king doubt. Every year we add more pillows to the construction of my character. Last year we had 46 pillows duct taped to my body, so this year I'm going for 50 pillows.

### AU: What are some of the band's career highlights to date?

DB: I'd imagine that releasing the *State Of Grace* CD was the pinnacle for the band up until that point. The two Malevolence demos that we recorded were a really great time in our lives. Playing with Zimmer's Hole back in early 2016 was an awesome blast from the past.



### AU: Tell us about your radio show.

DB: I've hosted the Rock n' Roll Breakfast Show at 101.9 FM CFUV for around 11 years. One of my co-hosts, Yogi, is a professional roadie that has toured the world with everybody from Slayer to Paul Anka. I've interviewed many cool people while doing the show; Rob Halford, Ace Frehley, Glen Tipton, Nikki Sixx, Yngwie Malmsteen, Billy Talent and even

Sly and the Family Stone's Jerry Martini. Hosting that radio show became my weekly exorcism, helping me deal with any of the shit that life was throwing at me. The sound of a good song can fix almost anything.

### AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?

DB: I am an ordained minister and have officiated a couple really cool theme weddings; a Star Wars wedding (I was Yoda and married Darth Vader to Luke Skywalker's mom) as well as a KISS wedding with pyro (oh yeah, I'm licensed to blow sh\*t up too). I was Gene, and lit their living room ceiling on fire.

### AU: Where can we keep up to date on the happenings with the band?

DB: We have a Facebook group. I can always be reached through my website and email: rev@rocknrollbreakfast.com if ever anyone wants to offer us gigs. We'll bring our wall of Marshals with a ton of drums, smoke geysers, and nurses too.

### AU: Any final words for our readers?

DB: Being sober is great. If I can do it with alcohol at only an arms-length away, and hot babes removing their clothing, then so can you. If you need help with your drinking, and don't know what to do; there are people out there just like you that figured out what to do, and they can help you. So can I.



# DECEMBER 2018

**03 THE FACELESS**  
+ RINGS OF SATURN + THE LAST SECONDS OF LIFE + INTERLOPER

**05 ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR BALL**

**07 STRIKER**  
+ HAZZERD + SOLBORN + TRAVELER

**08 HANG THE DJ** HOLIDAY EDITION NO COVER BEFORE 10PM  
RETRO - NEW WAVE - CLASSIC ALTERNATIVE - GOTH - INDUSTRIAL - BRITPOP

**12 SIX DEGREES OF MOVIE TRIVIA**

**DEC 08** **HANG THE DJ** HOLIDAY EDITION  
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**DEC 29** **MOTHER F\*\*KERS** THE BORDERGUARDS  
HOCKEY MOMS 15 CENT FREAKSHOW THE RINGWALDS

**21 STAB TWISTMAS**  
+ STAB TWIST PULL + BAZARABA + AFTER THE PROPHET + MERC + THIRD CHAMBER

**28 CHIMERA**

**29 THE MOTHERF\*\*KERS & THE BORDERGUARDS**  
+ HOCKEY MOMS + 5 CENT FREAKSHOW + THE RINGWALDS

**31 HTDJ + NYE 80's vs 90's**  
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**15 IGNITE**

**20 FAKE MUSTACHE**

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## Hellnite

Interview by Roger the Shrubber

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Paolo Belmar: This is Paolo Belmar, guitar player, vocalist and composer of Hellnite. People know me for reaching my goals, dreams and for not letting anything to stop me. Hellnite is known in Mexico for the song "Stage on Fire."

**AU: Tell us about the formation of Hellnite. What is the band all about? You originally began in Mexico, is that correct?**

PB: Yes, everything about Hellnite started in Mexico City. I always wanted to be in a band, since I was in elementary school. Hellnite is the product of a band that I formed in high school with my childhood friends, we got along well and we achieved some success in Mexico City, the first EP was released in Mexico. Then after some years I realized my friends were not trying to do this as a career, but I was serious about this, so I moved to Canada for university and I took the project with me.

**AU: I'm hearing a lot of classic thrash and death metal influence – how would you describe your sound?**

PB: Yeah, *Midnight Terrors* is mostly thrash and

if you ask me right now how I described the sound I would say it's cheesy, to be hundred percent honest. I wrote these songs five years ago. I just want this album to be released so I can work on the next one.

**AU: What was it like, relocating to Canada? Can you compare and contrast the metal scenes in each country? Are they similar or very different?**

PB: In my own experience I find both scenes pretty similar to each other, both are a small world where bands and followers know each other and share good times with good music. Something that I find great about the Canadian metal scene is all the support offered from the media and other resources for the local artists, like small and big festivals, for example.

**AU: You have your debut album, *Midnight Terrors*, slated for release in February, tell us about the album! What can we expect to hear on it, musically speaking?**

PB: As I said before, this is music that I wrote

death influenced, but right now the sound of Hellnite is going through a transition that it is difficult to name, everyone will be able to understand what I mean by the time we release the next album after *Midnight Terrors*. So

four or five years ago, I really want it to be released as soon as possible. Therefore, the kind of music that I am writing now it is way different. When you grow up, you listen new music and you get new interests. Basically what people will hear is classic thrash, death and heavy metal mostly, also some new elements that can be found as a clue of the new direction that the music will take.

**AU: You've mentioned that your lyrics and themes revolve around the paranormal, can you elaborate on that a little? What kind of stories will we hear on *Midnight Terrors*?**

PB: Yes, *Midnight Terrors* is based on common horror stories. The main point is related to the common fears of "non-existing" things and situations related to horror stories that we usually hear about. For example, "Phantom Force" refers to that moment of the transition of being awake/asleep when your body is physically paralyzed but your mind is conscious, people commonly call it sleep paralysis. There is a theory that says your body can suffer a spiritual possession by an evil entity and stuff related to that stream. The lyrics of the album are inspired by classic stories and movies that are about common fears of humanity. We hear a story about giant creatures emerging from the seas in the song "Beasts from the Deep" and other different topics of the same category in the other songs. "Spirits Prevail" is inspired in the movie *Insidious* by James Wan, and "Beasts from the Deep" is inspired in the movie *Pacific Rim* by Guillermo Del Toro.

**AU: What will the rest of 2019 have in store for you as a band? Will you be touring to support the album, writing more music, shooting any videos?**

PB: Mostly writing and producing new music for the upcoming releases, we will have some shows on summer of 2019 to support *Midnight Terrors*, but the main goal of 2019 is to release the second official full-length album.

## SHR-EDMONTON

**AU: You've also mentioned that the band will be taking a different direction after the release of *Midnight Terrors*... can you elaborate on that at all? What does the far future hold for Hellnite?**

PB: I do not want to screw up the surprise, I do not want to say something that creates expectations in our followers, because when they hear the new songs they might not perceive it in the same context as I do. I want to release the new album and let everyone to understand and label it in the category that makes sense for them, which I am really confident will happen. So if I allow myself to say something about this different direction I can say this: when I wrote *Midnight Terrors* I was only listening to heavy metal, and now five years later I am in university, studying jazz and contemporary music. I started to get into jazz, fusion, progressive rock, blues, funk, EDM, and all sort of things that I did not imagine before. So, even if I try to stick with the same stream as *Midnight Terrors* it is impossible, my head is full of new shit now. I just want to keep few elements from before, only for the people who have been following Hellnite from the beginning, they really deserve that.

**AU: When and where can we see you play live next?**

PB: Summer of 2019, we have not confirmed date and place yet, we are too busy working on the next release.

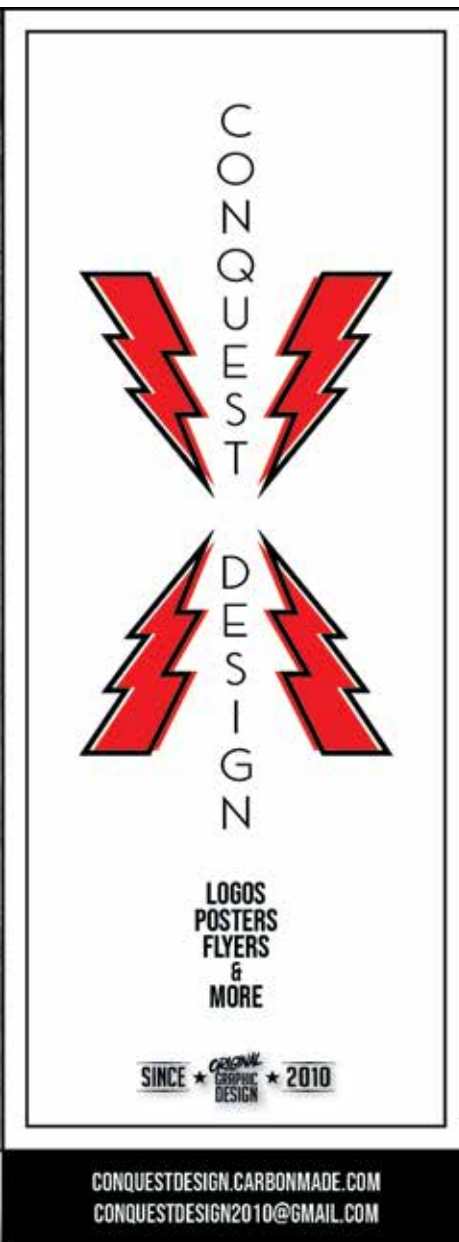
**AU: Any final words for our readers?**

PB: I just would like to say thanks to the people who has been there always supporting this project, and for our new followers, thanks for reading this and I strongly encourage to take a listen to Hellnite, we have some new and cool material coming up for all of you metalheads. Thank you very much.

[www.facebook.com/Hellnite.Mx](http://www.facebook.com/Hellnite.Mx)

PHOTO CREDIT: Kefikim Design









## The Great Sabatini

Interview by Roger the Shrubber

### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Sean Sabatini: This is Sean, allergic to cats and dogs, prone to heavy snoring, general mouth-breathing, long shit-taking, and guitar playing bane of sound technicians.

### AU: Give us a brief history of The Great Sabatini, who's in the band and how did you form?

SS: Rob and I grew up together. We've been playing in bands together since our teenage years. We sorta knew Joe (bass) and bugged him to jam with us when we were starting this thing 11 years ago. There was a buddy named Will playing drums with us in the early days but it didn't work out. Circumstances were fortunate and Steve became available at that time and has been with us for the last ten years. We've toured around the world despite never being asked to do so and have refused to stop making unpalatable records, even though it's not a "good look" for serious adults who are mostly pushing 40. We do it for the love.

**AU: You just released your new album, *Goodbye Audio*, this November,**

**congratulations! For those of us who haven't heard it yet, what can we expect? How does it compare to your past releases? Does it explore any particular themes or topics?**

SS: *Goodbye Audio* is a mostly straightforward sludgy noise-rock record which we recorded the old-fashioned way... by playing the songs together in a big room at the same time. The last track on the album is a

big long studio affair, meaning we threw in every sort of thing we were capable of, and even some that we weren't capable of (like violin). The album definitely benefits from the fact that we are a good band. We know each other and we connect very easily at this point... so putting it together live off the floor or orchestrating a million overdubs for the big finale was a piece of cake, which it probably would not have been during year three or four of this thing. Time has been our friend in this way. The general theme of the tunes wound up being loss and the inevitability of death. From a bunch of angles. I love our former records but this one is sort of the daddy in our discography... it's bigger, taller, hairier, scarier but still somehow full of love and the odd tender moment.

### AU: You just completed a run of shows in eastern Canada, how were those? Any favourite gigs from the past year you want to tell us about?

SS: All of the gigs were good. Two of them were poorly attended but it didn't bother us... we were too busy having fun hanging with and watching our brothers in Cellos every night, and having a master class in rock power given to us on two of these occasions by Shallow North Dakota. But the final gig, at Turbo Haus in Montreal was pretty much hands-down the best gig we've ever been part of. Every minute of it was pure magic to

us. The venue was full, everyone played like their lives depended on it and the air was heavy with love and danger.

### AU: What does life on the road look like with The Great Sabatini? Do you have an essential tour survival kit?

SS: We spend far less time on the road than we used to. And our interpersonal relations have been tense from time to time... it can be compromising to lock yourself in a van with others for weeks on end. But those stresses can also tie you all together in a beautiful way. Steve and I were talking about our first couple tours stateside just the other day. Those tours were difficult, sleeping in the van in Wal-Mart parking lots every night, but it made us really tight. I feel like we were unstoppable at that time. Consideration for your tour mates is the most important thing, though. You're all sharing a very close proximity for long stretches... if you're not a team player you won't last long.

### AU: When can we see you play live next? What do you hope that audiences will take away from your live performances?

SS: Hopefully we will have some stuff to do next year but things are tentative and our lives are too complicated now to be touring a bunch. But I feel that if you catch us, especially since gigs are fewer and more far between, we'll be playing with as much conviction as we can muster. We care about playing well but we also place a lot of importance on the honesty and energy behind the performance. Hopefully people take that away from our sets.

### AU: What does 2019 have in store for you as a band? Will you be touring more? Writing and recording?

SS: Everything is tentative at the moment. We have a split with our friends in Great Falls on Hex Records coming out hopefully before the end of the year. We've dropped a lot of music this year so I hope that it settles in with people moving into the new year and does some work for us.

# MONTREAL MASSACRE

I'm always working on new music for TGS and getting the guys to take it apart and reconfigure things. The creative dept is always working. As I said, we hope to get out some more next year if circumstance allows but we won't over-extend ourselves... we all have big commitments outside of this.

### AU: What are your goals for the future of this band? Any long-term aspirations?

SS: Our only real aspiration is to continue as long as we're all breathing. The pace may slow down but we find some personal rewards in making records and playing shows. Enough to keep us going. We're always trying to find ways to expand our audience and make the practical issues of recording and doing shows easier, with us being fairly spread out geographically. The theme of this band for the last 11 years always seems to be, "How do we get this thing done, efficiently." Maybe that's what's kept us going.

### AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?

SS: Steve has a really great weekly podcast called Taker Wide in which he talks with various artists about art and life. Everyone should listen to that, he does a great job with it and puts a lot of care and attention into it. If anyone is in Montreal and needs a tattoo done, I have a shop called DFA, I make tattoos, and I work with nine other crazy talented people who do as well.

### AU: Any final words for our readers?

SS: We really appreciate the support of Absolute Underground throughout the years. We also wanna thank everyone who has shown us love, especially recently, with the release of *Goodbye Audio*. It was a labor of love but that love is being sent back to us a lot lately and it means a ton to us. Thanks!

[thegreatsabatini.bandcamp.com/](http://thegreatsabatini.bandcamp.com/)

PHOTO CREDIT: Dave Levitt Photography

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# CANNABIS CORNER



The truth is that trust starts here.

A parent's job is not just to raise a child, but to prepare them for the world that awaits. The best thing that you can do as a parent is tell them how you honestly feel and about your own experiences. It will have a huge influence on the choices they make.

## Legalization Day How To Talk To Kids About Cannabis

By Julia Veintrop

We are all aware of the fact that there is no manual on perfect parenting, but when it comes to cannabis, things can get especially awkward. Legalization is here, and kids are not stupid.

Sooner or later, that child you care about is going to come in contact with cannabis or someone using it; when they do, it is important they understand what it is and what it isn't. Who better to explain cannabis than someone they trust... here's how:

### Tip 1 : First and foremost, be honest...

I once had a friend of mine explain a child's perspective with such simple beauty and truth; he said, "Kids don't know what the heck is going on but they always know a lot more than you think they do." They know that it is different than a cigarette because it smells different, so lying is obvious and completely pointless.

Growing up, my parents were open about cannabis, alcohol and other drugs. My mom always told me, if I'm going to take any kind of drug, make sure it is safe and grows in the ground; but to remember, no white powders under any circumstance.

I remember being offered drugs in high school and hearing my mom say no white powders in my head, I always just lit up a doobie. You might not know it at the time, but your kids are actually listening.

### Tip 2 : Get them to associate it with medicine...



Cannabis is medicine; telling a child that is not only accurate, it is a message that a kid will understand. If a child is taught to treat cannabis the same way they would Tylenol, a lot of issues can be prevented. There are numerous rules that kids are told surrounding medicine, pills and prescriptions such as:

### They know that medicine is administered by adults

When they are hurting, children know to tell an adult because they will figure out the best course of treatment. If the symptoms are bad enough, that adult decides to either go to a doctor or they take the appropriate medicine to help. Explain to your child that just as they would never help themselves to any cold syrup without asking, they

should never touch anything with cannabis in it without talking to an adult under any circumstance.

### No mans land to a child

Medicine cabinets are not play areas, plus, bottles and things that are supposed to be up there shouldn't be played with if they are left out. Telling a kid that your cannabis and where its stored needs to be treated like a medicine cabinet will make sense.

### Medicine comes in different forms

Kids know that prescriptions can come in pill form, liquid or even in an inhaler; they also understand that this medicine enters the body in different ways and cannabis is no different. If a child understands that cannabis is medicine and that the way you take it depends on the result you are looking for, they are more likely to understand the difference between inhalation, edibles and topicals. It will be easier to resist the temptation to see that package as a sweet and leave that cookie in the cupboard alone.

### Tip 3 : Explain that they are developing and you are not



Kids today feel pretty ripped off. They see an adult do something while telling them it is not ok and wonder why. The best thing to do is tell them; the reason why an adult can use cannabis is because they have developed. There is a time for a kid to be a kid and unless its for a specifically medical reason, using cannabis is meant for adult brains and bodies.

It's mainstream and come October 17th, its going to be fueling the economy. Never an easy conversation, but undoubtedly a necessary one, be upfront and honest, treat it as a medicine and explain that unless it is for your health, cannabis should only be

used by adults. Your kids are going to come in contact with cannabis sometime, so, they need to be prepared and know how to approach it.

v-cbc.ca/

## Legalization Day Adam Greenblatt

Interview by Iree-I

### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to on legalization day here in Vancouver?

Adam Greenblatt: I'm Adam Greenblatt from Canopy Growth and I'm the business development lead for BC.

### AU: What does BC look like to Canopy?

AG: BC looks like where cannabis was invented.

### AU: At the end of the day it's where the best weed comes from. I've always been proud to say I'm from British Columbia.

AG: Totally man. I mean I think BC bud is one of the original geographic indicators in the cannabis space. The small seed cannabis culture in BC and the number of dispensaries and just the amount of civil disobedience and the momentum of the movement out here really made it possible for the rest of Canada and lead to the social acceptance and really helped to torch the stigma. So, it's a privilege for us to have Federal licences to grow cannabis legally and to supply the myriad of retailers around the country and it's humbling being in BC because this is really where it all started.

### AU: What is happening today? We have Cypress Hill in the house. What's going on?

AG: Yeah, we're hosting the cannabis community tonight, we're celebrating Legalization Day. We're starting a new chapter of drug policy history in Canada. Turning the page on nine decades of prohibition and nine decades of fucking up peoples' lives with shitty laws and we're bringing it in with Cypress Hill, who better?

### AU: What about Dale the dealer down the street?

AG: Well, Dale's gotta write a business plan. There are doors open for Dale if he wants to walk through them.

### AU: So if someone wanted to brand their name and start their own thing?

AG: Well, let's just start out there and say that Canopy already has a trademark on Dale Bud, we locked that down early. I mean everyone's going to have to step up their game. It's not gonna be easy to transition but I think the doors are open widest in BC for pre-regulation

operators to transition but it's not going to be



easy.

### AU: People that are grandfathered are pretty smart, actually. Smart people.

AG: Well, I don't think there won't be a grandfathering. Even though you know dispensaries with municipal license are still gonna have to apply and go through the provincial licensing process so it bodes well if you have municipal approval, but there's there's more steps to follow.

### AU: What is your favorite strain? You've got the Tangie shirt on.

AG: I think my favorite strain is Congo. I'm also a big fan of CBD Skunk Haze and I'm stoked that Canopy has got that genetic and we're selling it as Penelope in the legal market.

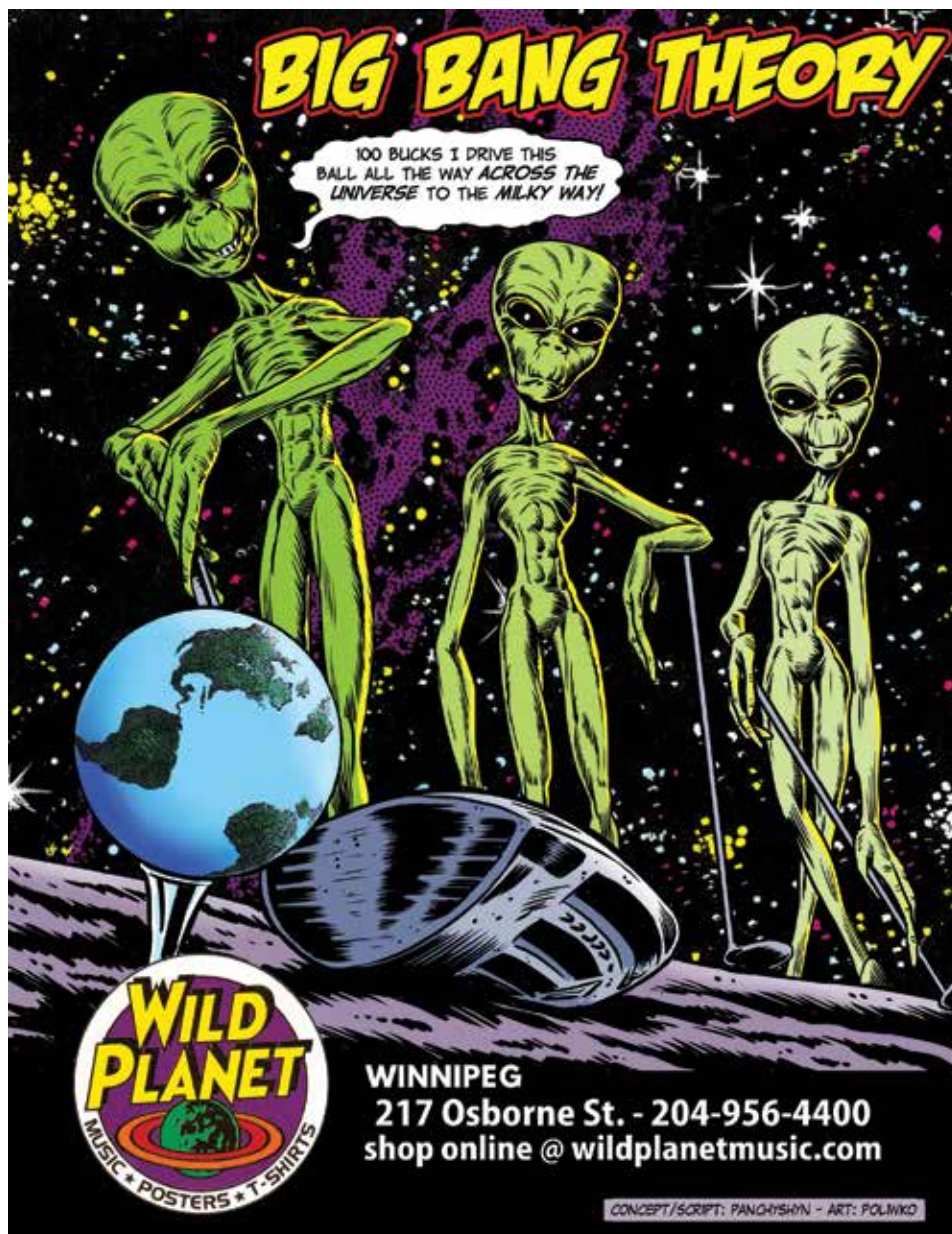
### AU: I'm hoping that the recreational sales could subsidize the medicinal sales for people that assistance.

AG: Well, I actually think the market potential for medical is exponentially larger than recreational. I think it's cool to contemplate subsidizing it with rec but really the end game is to turn cannabis into actual regulated and approved medicines and get it on drug formularies and to get it covered. In the interim it could be something to look at subsidizing medical with recreational but I think the end game is getting it covered by insurance companies.

### AU: Wow, amazing! Final words about Canada, cannabis, and the future?

AG: It's a historic day today and it's a victory for human rights and social justice before it's even a victory for cannabis commerce, and Cypress Hill is gonna rock the house tonight.

<https://www.canopygrowth.com/>







## Legalization Day Mat Beren - The House of the Great Gardener

By Iree-I

**Absolute Underground:  
What are you most  
known for?**

Mat Beren: My name is Mat and I the own House of the Great Gardener seed company. I've been in the marijuana game for 23 years and I recently signed on as a consultant with Canopy.

**AU: What are some  
of the strains you've  
developed?**

MB: Our most notable is the Barbara Bud, and most famous for the hash that she produces. She's at 22 trophies internationally. We spent the last few years developing CBD strains. So we have a CBD René, CBD Afghani, CBD Jean Guy. We also developed a high CBD low THC strain that produces that phenome 97% of the time in the seed, which is something that's extremely difficult to do.

**AU: So what does this special day mean to you?**

MB: To me it's legalization day. For me it's the day that we're crossing the line, right? I mean it's a free for all



now? No. There's still things that we have to change and work on. But for me it's legal now. So all of a sudden money can be directed in a way we had never seen before. It's almost like going from a steel wheel to rubber on asphalt. We're just now getting gasoline for the tank of our car so we don't have to push it down the

road and we can drive it down the road. So we're going to see that over the next three to five years. The money's going to be poured into developing the benefits of cannabis.

**AU: I'll let you smoke  
because we don't want it  
to be a microphone.**

MB: You just want it for yourself, haha.

**AU: What about this  
event where we have  
this media meet and  
greet and Cypress Hill is  
playing tonight?**

MB: So our friends DNA Genetics from California came up and brought their friends Cypress Hill. DNA is another seed company. I've been friends with DNA on the European Seed Expo tour for the last five years. They called me up and said they were coming to town and throwing a show to celebrate legalization.

**AU: This Blue Lime Pie we are puffing on is delicious.  
That is tasty! So, were you doing what you did before  
legally or illegally?**

MB: I have a medical license and I grow cannabis and I used to work with dispensaries and compassion clubs in Vancouver and Vancouver Island for the last 15 years. I had a federal court case, R v Beren, where we were busted growing for the compassion clubs and launched a six year constitutional court battle against the government and won on multiple fronts.

**AU: Who was your lawyer?**

MB: Mr. Kirk Tousaw.

**AU: What that a precedent setting case?**

MB: That was precedent setting, of course.

**AU: What does the future hold as we stand on this  
new frontier?**

MB: I think we are going to get to a point where you can buy CBD beside flower in the grocery store. As a powder or additive to everything. I think the benefits of cannabis have only begun with the legalization here in Canada.

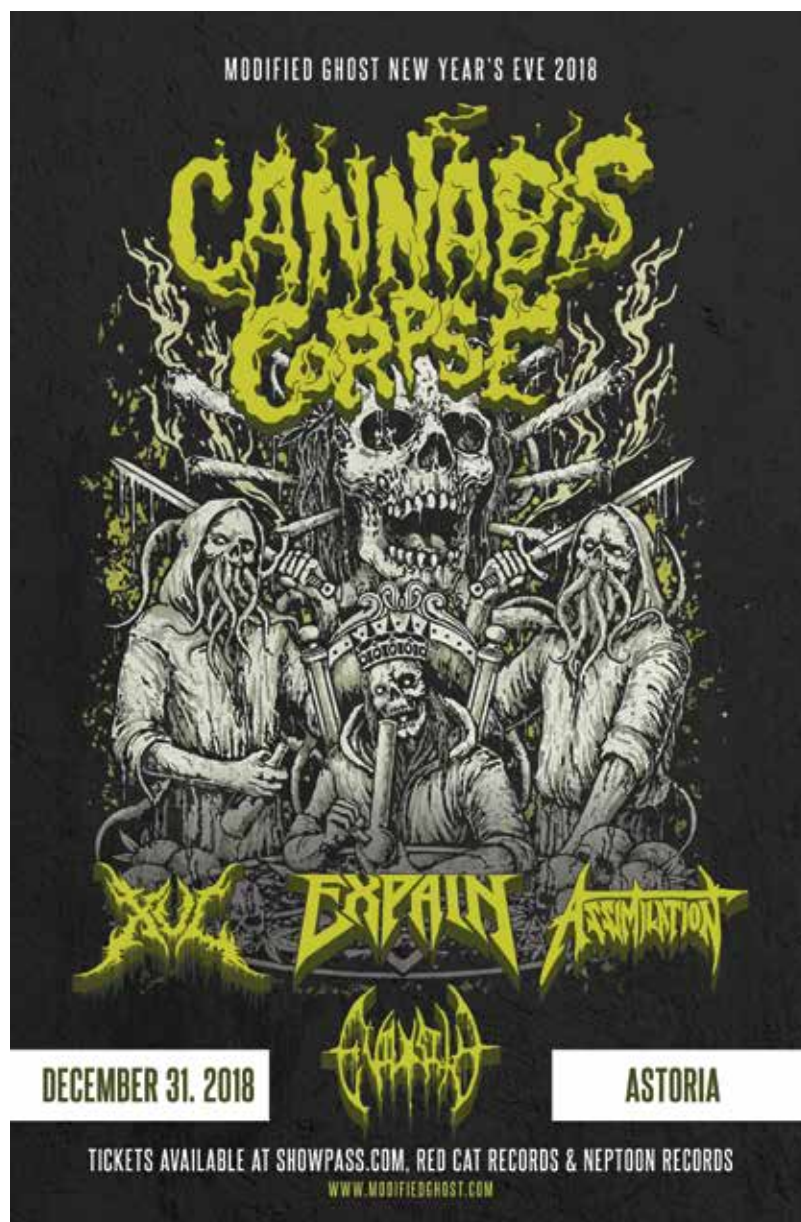
**AU: We might see cancer rates go way down.**

MB: I think you're going to find all kinds of things go down.

**AU: Final words for all the high Canadians.**

MB: Congratulations Canada! What a great achievement. The regulations and rules that we know will evolve and change and it will turn into cannabis on every street corner. Just the image of cannabis is just going to become daily life and nothing will change really except for people feeling better.

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# Legalization Day Hilary Black & Sheega Youngson

Interview by Iree-I

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to on this momentous occasion?**

Hilary Black: My name is Hilary Black and I am the founder of the first medical cannabis organization in the country, the BC Compassion Club Society, and I'm also the Director of Patient Education and Advocacy for Canopy.

Sheega Youngson: Hi, I am Sheega Youngson and I am senior manager of events and community engagement for Canopy Growth Corporation.

**AU: This is a big day for you. Tell us about the struggle towards this day.**

HB: This is the day that our legalization legislation passes in Canada and there are many things to be excited and to celebrate about. I am most excited about the potential global impact of what we are doing. This is not just about the beginning of a new industry but this is the beginning of the end of a war on drugs and those are incredibly powerful important moments in history to pause and reflect on.

**AU: And Canopy is one of the big players in the new game?**

SY: Absolutely! Since 2014 we've been building a

medical company. We were the first to come out with compassionate pricing for patients. Advocating for patients, bringing new products that are better suited to patient needs to the market. It's medical first always at Canopy Growth and with Spectrum Cannabis, we are going to be able to do that around the world. With the rec market, we are equally excited for legalization here in Canada. Tonight we are here to celebrate and make sure that as many people as possible understand that it's working what we're doing here in Canada and it's about time that other countries consider moving forward as well.

**AU: What about the people calling it Prohibition 2.0?**

HB: It's interesting some people are calling it Prohibition 2.0 but I'm calling it Legalization 1.0 and while I am celebrating and recognizing what we've done today, I know there is a tremendous amount of work left to be done in Canada. It's problematic that these regulations still include the criminal arm of the law at all. Particularly I'm upset about the fact that if parents want to model responsible consumption of cannabis to the youth in their home, they can't do it the way you can with alcohol without facing very stiff criminal penalties. I think the way that we should be regulating the cannabis industry that the criminal arm has no place in it and we aren't there yet. I've worked quite closely with the government. I consulted with Health Canada. I testified in front of the Senate and I've had the opportunity to work quite closely with some of the brilliant bureaucrats that have been trying to thread the needle and find legislation that the prohibitionists can live with and that the cannabis community can live with. It has not been an easy task. I think that their work is kind of like melting a glacier with a hairdryer. The kind of stigma and fear and rhetoric that still exists around cannabis within people that are in power is significant. We've made a giant step forward but the taxation on patients is unacceptable. Also amnesty better come very quickly and we have to get the criminal arm of the law out of the regulatory framework completely.

**AU: Will we be seeing more events like this Cypress Hill concert sponsored by Canopy?**

SY: With the Cannabis Act being implemented today officially obviously we have a new set of regulations we have to work within. Any time we do an event we work closely with our legal team and make sure that we're staying within the framework that we're given. So we're allowed to do two things: we can communicate brand preference and we can share factual information about our products within an age-gated space. For us everything comes down to education, making sure we're talking about responsible consumption.

**AU: Tonight is High Tea with Cypress Hill!**

SY: Cypress Hill! Yeah!!! Even in an age-gated space you need music. You'll see tonight, we are in Vancouver and it's legalization day. We are definitely bringing together the community and the trailblazers that fought for this day and helped us get here and if you look around the room you have a lot of those people here. So that's what tonight is about first and foremost.

HB: Cypress Hill came all the way from South America. They are on a tight tour schedule and they worked somehow miraculously into their schedule to come up to Canada to celebrate with us.

SY: And Cypress Hill have been huge advocates for legalization for decades and decades.

**AU: It's like Canada is finally catching up with some of the legal states like Washington and California etc,**

HB: One thing that's interesting when you compare Canadian and American markets is that because we have federal legislation we have the banks and the markets on side. So I actually think that the fever in the markets in Canada around this new industry is one of the things that's going to drive the evolution of prohibition being repealed in other countries. I think we're going to see other countries change their cannabis legislation quite quickly. I don't believe that they're going to do it because they're ready to admit cannabis is an amazing beneficial plant, prohibition is based in lies and racism and it's been used as a tool of oppression and social injustice. They're going to say oh there's a whole new global market coming online and we don't want to miss out. As long as we stop putting people in cages for using and loving and celebrating this plant. I mean, cannabis has been prohibited in Canada for 95 years, 5 months and 24 days as of today.

**AU: Will there be a resurgence of Hemp?**

HB: Yeah, absolutely. This gives us the opportunity, not many people are talking about the environmental benefits that can come from us being way less restricted around cultivating hemp.

SY: Regulations around hemp are changing and that industry is expanding as well. With the demand for CBD you're going to see that grow



exponentially as more and more people are looking to access that specific cannabinoid.

**AU: Final words for the future?**

HB: One of the things I am really proud of is our Canopy Rivers, which is our investment arm because it's the part of the company that knows that we have a responsibility to be working to bring in small mom-and-pop style growers, micro growers, helping them to navigate coming into the regulatory framework because there are massive barriers to entry. Things like the investments required and I think they deserve some support. The other thing that's really important to me personally is my roots with the Compassion Club, where we funded a wellness centre providing free alternative health care to our patients. I think that we are trying to carry that legacy forward with Canopy and we have some very significant corporate social responsibility initiatives where we are paying attention to the needs in the community and investing huge dollars into trying to find solutions. One of the ones I'm really proud of is we just donated two and a half million dollars to the University of British Columbia to create an endowment to support the world's first ever Professorship of Cannabis Science. First of all it elevates the level in academia in the professional world that we're talking about cannabis and cannabis science but it's going to be focused on researching the role of cannabis in the opiate epidemic. We all know that cannabis has amazing substitution powers but we need clinical evidence to break down barriers for substance users around the world. So I have faith that the cannabis industry as we grow globally, that we will all continue to hang on to those roots and that legacy. And I want to see us be the most compassionate, the most generous, the most responsible industry in the world.

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## Legalization Day High Times

By Iree-I

**Absolute Underground: High**

**Times at the Cypress Hill show tonight. What's on the horizon for the future of the Cannabis Cup?**

High Times: We're going to be having twenty three Cannabis Cups in 2019. So we're very excited for that. We're having them in Jamaica, Michigan,



worldwide.

**AU: Any plans for Canada?**

HT: We had a cup in Canada previously. We're very excited. High Times is here covering legalization so don't rule out another possibility of a Cannabis Cup here. Vancouver would make sense for sure. It's the home of BC Bud. I love smoking that BC Bud. It's definitely an epicentre of cannabis culture.

**AU: BC weed is like the high watermark and people finally have free reign to show the world now that it's been legalized.**

HT: Some people are calling it Prohibition 2.0 cause there is a lot of regulation going on right now. But it's a great leap forward and it's all about breaking the stigma and getting cannabis into the mainstream.

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## Legalization Day

### Kirk Tousaw

Interview by Iree-I

#### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?

Kirk Tousaw: My name is Kirk Tousaw and I've spent a lot of time working on Cannabis Policy Reform from the perspective of defending clients in the criminal courts and making constitutional challenges in both civil and criminal litigation.

#### AU: What day is it today?

KT: It's Legalization Day here in Canada, October 17, 2018. And I hope a turning point in the history of struggles to liberate this plant worldwide.

#### AU: It's legal to carry 30 grams of weed but are you going to jail for 14 years if you have 31 grams?

KT: Well no, you're not.

#### AU: What if you have five pounds of weed?

KT: Quite likely not. You can keep going up but any amount that you run into I will answer no you're quite likely not going to jail for the maximum period because people in Canada are not sentenced to statutory maximums for virtually any crimes and certainly not cannabis crimes. I've defended people with hundreds of kilograms of cannabis and tens of thousands of cannabis plants. I've never even had a client go to jail. So the idea that because we're legalizing cannabis all of a sudden there's going to be a program against people and they're going to end up doing 14 years in jail for what are minute quantities of cannabis in the grand scheme of things I think is absolute nonsense and simply not going to happen.

#### AU: What about Dale the weed dealer down the street, should he be worried?



KT: I assume he should be less worried because I think it's harder to get a search warrant. I think it's less interesting for police to investigate in a criminal way cannabis offences. In most places that have legalized cannabis, arrests for cannabis related offences of all kinds are dramatically down.

#### AU: How did the medical system come out of this? Is it better or worse off because of legalization?

KT: The medical system comes out worse off in the sense of excise taxes now being applied to cannabis sold through the legal system. In terms of your ability produce for yourself or have somebody produce for you on a designated producing basis, that doesn't change. In terms of your storage limits, essentially medical patients no longer have storage limits at their homes or their places of production, which is I think is a positive. I think there will be a decline in access, as a result of there still not being a legal framework for the sale of derivative products, most edible products, concentrates, that people came to rely on. The people that are either making them or selling them may stop doing so. I think there'll be a lot of people that don't stop. I think they'll be a thriving illicit economy in cannabis for a long time. I think that most people understand the only real way to eliminate the illicit market in cannabis is to make the legal industry have the best products at the best prices with the best customer service. In particular for patients what we need to do is pay for the cannabis. It should be subsidized. I think we'll find actually that once we do that we're going to see health care savings overall because people will stop using much more expensive prescription drugs that are actually more dangerous.

#### AU: What about the government setting THC limits or the irradiation of marijuana?

KT: Luckily the government is not growing cannabis. The government is regulating the industry and private companies are growing cannabis in a manner that is frankly very very tightly regulated. There is a restricted list of products that can be used. I'm hopeful that the new micro-producer regulations will stimulate a

whole bunch of craft industry to transition over and we're going to see a bunch of really great products coming on the market. That's happened everywhere else it's been legalized

#### AU: Are the current dispensaries operating legally or illegally at the moment?

KT: The dispensaries are as illegal today as they were yesterday. They're subject now to a different set of potential penalties. Most significantly less onerous than they used to be subjected to but a few that are more onerous in particular if youth are involved. I'm hopeful that we recognize that there's probably not sufficient supply or stores in the legal industry to satisfy the demand for

cannabis that's out there. So if we don't crack down on the ones doing it illegally and we provide a pathway to transition over and become legal and if we get their suppliers legalized as well then I think we will have a very robust and really positive system here in Canada.


#### AU: What are some of your favorite strains?

KT: I'm a Sativa guy so I'm a fan of things like the Congolese, the Hazes and Skunks. The occasional Kush. But different tokes for different folks. I think that's what the great thing about cannabis is. We all love it, we love it for its variety.

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## Legalization Day

### John Conroy

By Iree-I

**Absolute Underground: You've been at the forefront of this battle for legalization. Can you explain who you are?**

John Conroy: I am a lawyer and I practice law in my offices in Abbotsford and Mission BC, in the Fraser Valley. I was called the bar in 1972 which is when marijuana arrests went from around maybe 200 a year in the early 60s, 800 in the late 60s, to 10,000 in about '72 and then to 50,000 by '78. So I incorporated NORML Canada in 1977 and I was involved as a defence lawyer in hundreds of cases involving people charged mostly in the early days with simple possession. The big cases were all coming in from Colombia, Thailand and California. It was all stuff coming up in big boats. So that was the major practice for a long time. Not many grow-ops back then, people didn't grow in the lower mainland really.

That was the time of Le Dain and his recommendations for basically decriminalizing cannabis in '72 and Pierre Trudeau introduced absolute conditional discharges so people's criminal records for simple possession would be wiped out at an ordered time. Every political party said they were going to legalize or decriminalize and all kinds of different things came up to the brink. In '74 there were all kinds of different schemes to make it purely Summary Conviction and things like that but none of them ever got through and ultimately we got the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act.

Until the Narcotic Control Act came in in '61 it was a mandatory minimums of six months for possession of any drugs and it was the discretion of the court to also sentence whipping and hard labour. That didn't disappear until '61.

I would say it was around the late '90s that the whole revival in terms of medical use came back in focus. Especially here in Vancouver with Hilary Black. The focus on medical was interesting because of it educated people about benefits as opposed to them always thinking of it as a drug.



So we fought over time to try and get people fines or absolute conditional discharges and kept putting all of this stuff in front of the courts with huge amounts of information that's out there on cannabis.

When you look at the history of what happened in the US with the slow legalization state by state and now Canada has suddenly legalized today, so we'll await the remainder of the states. It's an interesting unwinding of what's occurred.

**AU: Any advice for Dale the local weed dealer?**

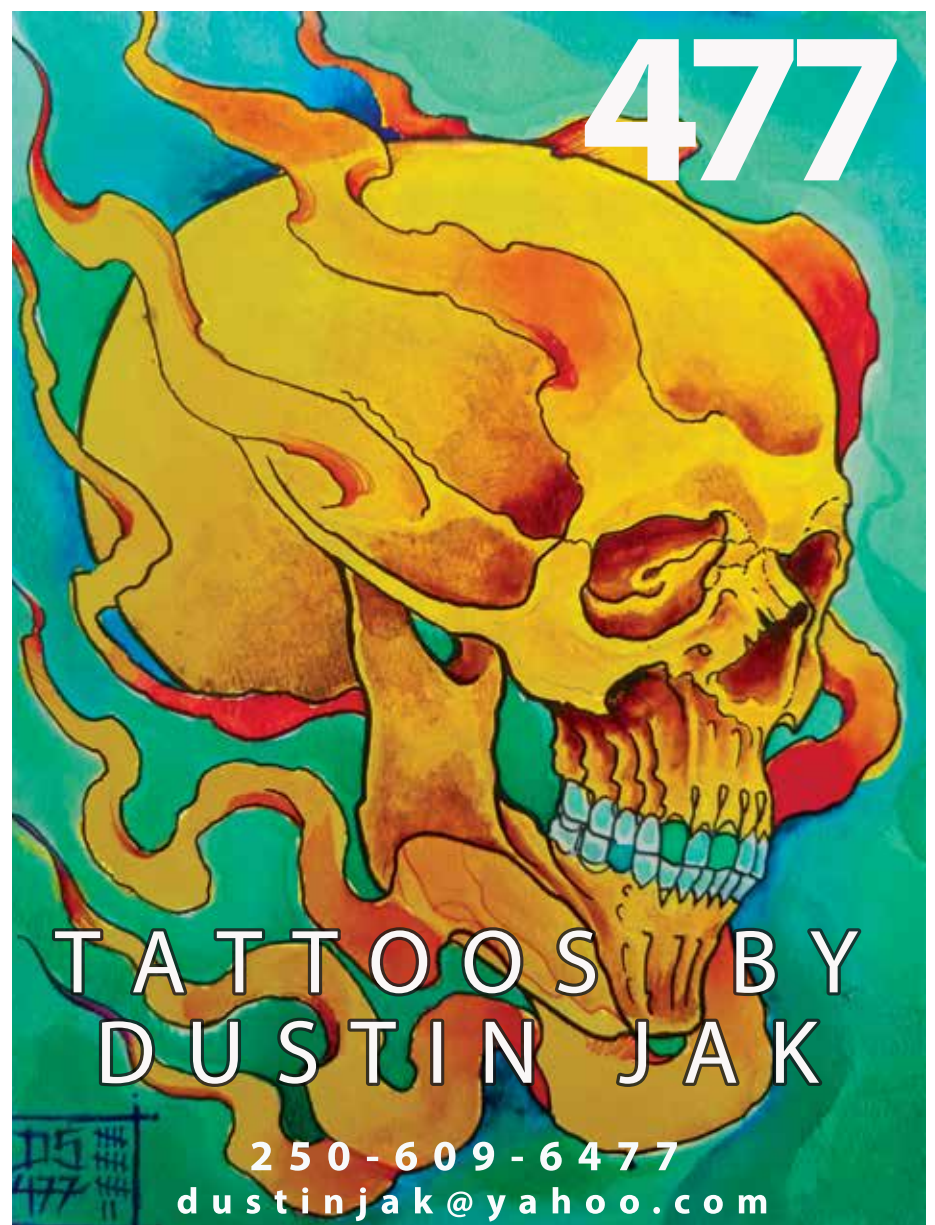
JC: If there are people in the industry we need to bring them in and not push them out.

**AU: You've been key in setting precedents and getting us to this day of cannabis legalization. What is your hope for the future?**

JC: People need to overcome this stigmatization and this fear reaction that has been foisted upon them. It's going to take more time to slowly educate people. I've been at this for 45 years and I think we are heading in the right direction but it may take some more time to get it to what we think is the best system.

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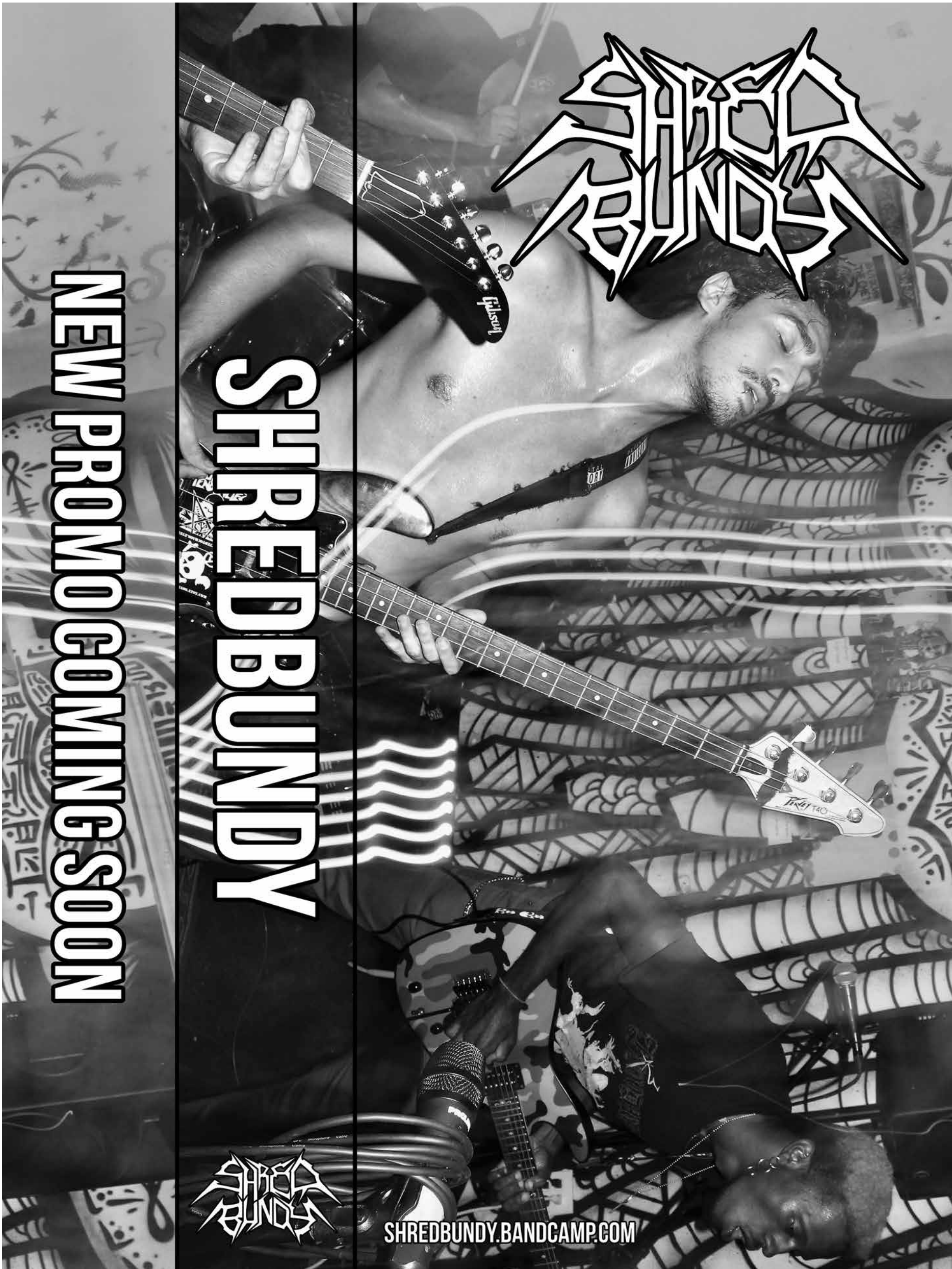
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## Hello Mother...

By Vince D'Amato

An online film critic who had been praising the performance of genre-film legend Barbara Crampton for her part in Adam Wingard's *You're Next* contextualized Crampton's role in the 2011 horror film as the matriarch of the victimized family. Honestly, up until that point, I had not really thought about the considerable weight of the matriarchal role within the horror film. Crampton herself had played the role before, in her younger years, working with Stuart Gordon and Jeffrey Combs in 1996's *Castle Freak*, and has since re-defined this type of character in the cult-ish *We Are Still Here* (2015) and in the more recent existential-horror of 2016's *Sun Choke* – but looking back at the last couple of years in horror, it seems that the role of the matriarch in the neo-gothic take on the horror genre has gone from the caring mother played by Ellen



neo-gothic leanings, with Toni Collette as the matriarch this time around, into a far more violently convoluted situation where Ari Aster (the writer and the director) very nearly out-clevers himself in trying to

one-up the classic gothicness of *The Others* and various types of Shirley Jackson-inspired horrors that came before that. While *Hereditary* is admittedly scary and makes way more sense than the similar and testosterone-led *The Kill List* (2011), it also suffers from some of the same mistakes Ben Wheatley made with *The Kill List* (which had also been a very celebrated modern gothic-horror film of its time), where the obsession to be clever very nearly drowns all conceivable logic of the film's own plot. In

regards to this, sometimes these over-reaching horror films that are aggressively vying to outdo their predecessors instead make me yearn for films like *The Others*, *Castle Freak*,

and *The Exorcist*. However, while *Hereditary* very nearly reached the points of all-out, logic-defying plot-jumps that *The Kill List* unintentionally and unfortunately achieved, thankfully this celebrated 2018 horror entry stopped itself short of that, and also weaved itself



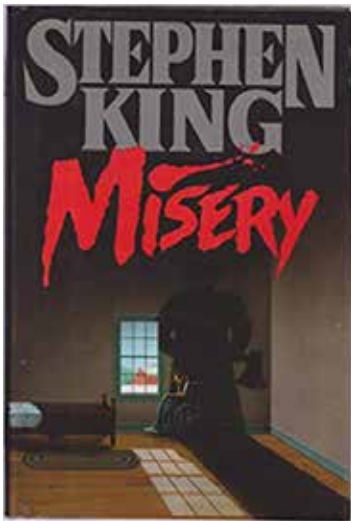
Burstyn in 1974's *The Exorcist* to the mothers that have become fully integrated into the actual horror of these cinematic stories, at times as the victims and others as contributors to the perpetrators of the films' violence and bloodshed. Indeed, the idea of the matriarchal character within the cinematic (and literary) horror genre has been integrated within their usually gothic designs. To forget Nicole Kidman's turn as the matriarch in Alejandro Amenábar's 2001 gothic horror/thriller *The Others* is to forget that 2018's celebrated film *Hereditary* is essentially a re-imagining of a cinematic story that existed 17 years before its release. However, the writer of *Hereditary* brings its

into enough other-worldly nightmarish "logic" to keep itself precariously grounded. Added to this, we have Toni Collette's finely matched performance as the film's leading protagonist



and family matriarch, and to his credit, Aster's direction (and misdirection) of his horror tale that at least keeps viewers involved with a high-strung and emotionally visceral cinematic connection. Kudos to that!

Ideas of the gothic matriarch were also re-twisted in 2018's less successful *Winchester* (Helen Mirren) and completely re-modernized to existentially challenge the entire idea of family roles and emotional loyalty in 2016's *The Girl on the Train* (Emily Blunt, Haley Bennett), but intriguingly, the



classical idea of the influence of the matriarch in the horror genre seems to have not gone out of style, as evidenced by the popularity of the television series *Bates Motel* and actress Vera Farmiga who plays Norma Bates, *Psycho*'s Norman Bates' mother; while Stephen King saw fit to completely subvert the idea of the traditional matriarch as far back as 1987 in his tense novel *Misery* with the character Annie Wilkes, nurse to many, mother to none...

until Paul Sheldon is delivered to her, injured, and in need of care...

In 2015, *Trick 'R Treat* director Michael Dougherty brought us his take on Christmas horror by popularizing the Krampus legend for

North American audiences in his seasonal horror film (aptly titled) *Krampus*. Here he also cast Toni Collette as the family matriarch, although in a very different turn than 2018's

*Hereditary* takes.

Here, Collette holds her family together with fraying wires as her character overcomes her familial anxieties with heroic bravery in full-on-motherhood, trying to protect her cubs and her clan form the forces of Christmas Evil. While *Gremlins* may have been the satirical

# Absolute Horror

*Deadly Night, Christmas Evil*, the groundbreaking *Black Christmas*, and even the insanely satirical and over-the-top *Jack Frost* (no, not the Micheal Douglas movie). However, let's not forget that the idea of Christmas and all of its religiously celebratory background is fertile grounds for the most gothic of horror stories, where the matriarchs can shine in the atmosphere and genre of terror. Aside from *Krampus* and the winter-

suspense and intensity to warp the genre and engage the audience to impressive affect. By far, *The Tall Man* has to be the most underrated of the films mentioned here, I have yet to converse with a horror fan who has even heard of this film, yet Lauger's previous film *Martyrs* rode on its own praise for years, making it a modern cult classic.

Whether Christmas-themed or not, let's not forget the utter psychological depths of the



dark holiday entry of its time period, *Krampus* is far darker in both humour and horror than Joe Dante's 1984 Christmas-horror romp. In Joe Dante's cult classic, Frances Lee McCain plays the matriarch who tries (somewhat triumphantly) to hold down the fort while little green monsters multiply and violently tear up the Norman Rockwell-esque neighborhood – but motherhood in the sub-genre of Christmas horror is not as naturally ingrained as one would assume, with Christmas being a traditionally family-filled time of the year – in fact, most Christmas horror films would fall far more easily into the slasher sub-genre, like *Silent Night*,



matriarch's role in these goth horror tales – whether she's good or evil, all boys and girls are looking to their mommy to



bound *We Are Still Here*, Pascal Lauger, famous for directing *Martyrs*, brought us his own winter-bound tale focusing directly on motherhood, in his Canadian-produced 2012 film *The Tall Man*, which features Jessica Beil as a young mother whose small son appears to have been kidnapped. Walking the line between snowbound gothic thriller and classic horror film, *The Tall Man* utilizes

save them from the monsters. Only sometimes, the monster is mommy.

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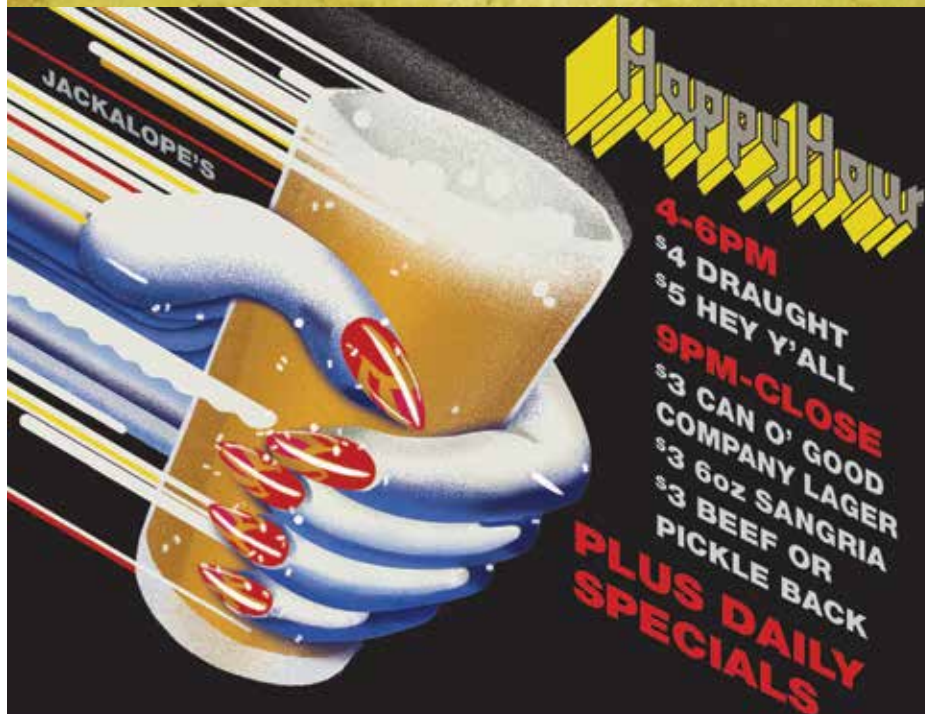


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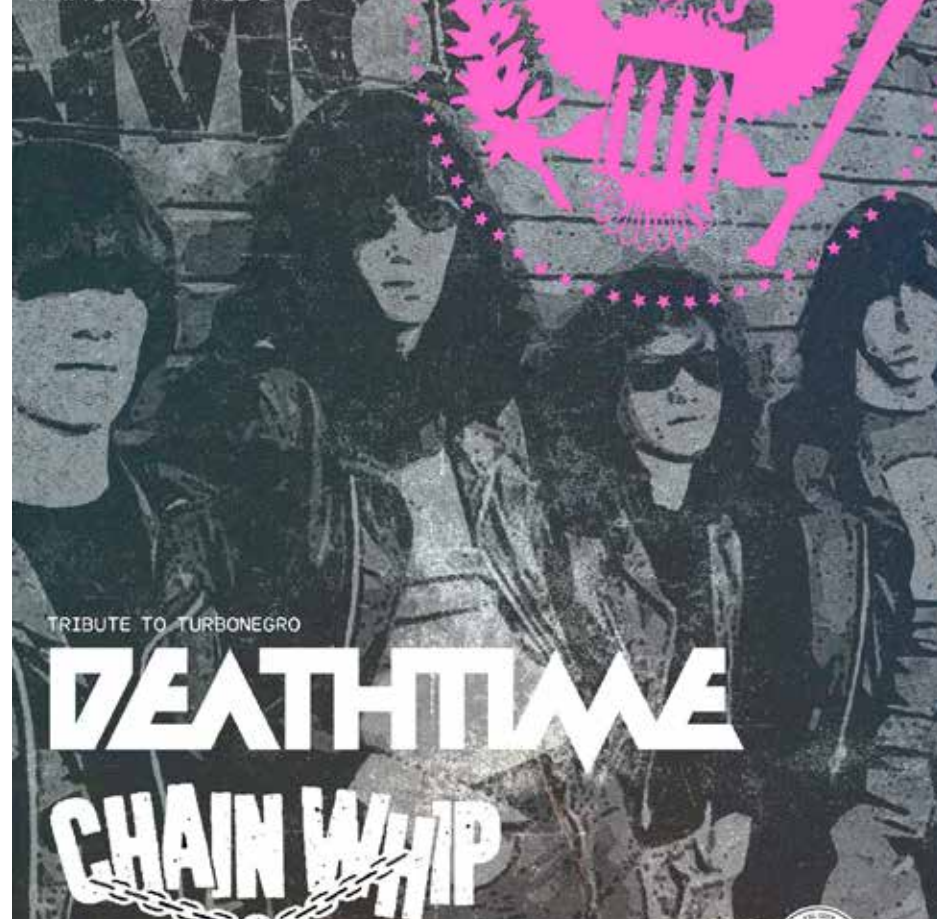
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# JEWS HATE!



By Jesus Maggot

Every year. Every fucking year. You know what Jesus hates? Xmas! And no, I will not use my name in vain by using the full word. Fuck them and fuck you! You know those bitchy people who have birthdays close to xmas? Imagine that times infinity! Every year Jesus tries to have a party, and every year do you know what happens? "Oh, we'd love to come Jesus, but we have to go celebrate xmas." Are you fucking kidding me? Where the fuck do you think the day bloody well came from? The fucking stork?

Deep breaths Jesus, deep breaths. Ok, so as you can tell, I'm not a fan of what used to be known as my birthday. And it's not the consumerism or capitalism that pisses Jesus off (Hell, I'd be a capitalist if I could only afford it!) it's that I died so that you could have the things you covet! The things you desire. The things that allow you to act superior to your fellow man. Bragging rights if you will. But you even fucked that up! I'm so disappointed in all of you.

My birthday used to be something really special. It truly meant something. Now it's just an excuse to start shoving another holiday down your throat just as soon as Halloween (the only holiday that matters) is over. It's lost all its joy. At least for me. Look at it this way. When I was born I was given gold, fucking gold people!

Now in contrast, last year I was gifted a small toy penguin that shit chocolate candy. I mean, I died for your fucking sins, so that you could keep sinning and... wait...

Is this all my fault? Is this the ramification of me wanting you all to live care free lives? Maybe it was too much too soon. Maybe I didn't think it through enough. I'm so sorry, my children. All I wanted for you

all was to be happy. But I didn't think. I DIDN'T THINK! I promise I will make this all right, my children. I'm going to have a chat with Dad after I smoke this five-paper joint. It's always best to be stoned before broaching any topic with the old man. What was I writing about?

Oh ya. So in conclusion, nothing I said or did really mattered. As long as you give Jesus a gift once in a while that doesn't look like literal shit, this deity can make it through another year. Because it all comes down to material things! And this Holy Ghost needs a new pair of sandals. So have a Merry Fucking Xmas and a cuntastic new year. Then hand over your soul, let's make it a done deal!

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## Music In Science

### Emotions and “Metal” Health

Interview by Aeryn Shrapnel

Music and pop culture experts PureGrainAudio are teaming up with scientists of Cambridge University to explore how metal affects our emotions. There has been the occasional study with a similar scope, but nothing tailored to a specific genre, and not much beyond anger and depression. The team aims to collect responses to 33 excerpts that represent 15 subgenres of metal and publish the results in a scientific journal. Participants also learn more about themselves with information relating to their own personality and temperament types.

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Nick Dunn: My name is Nick Dunn, and in terms of infamy, I think mostly I'm infamous for constantly allowing my mouth to run ahead of my brain and into embarrassing situations.

**AU: What made you decide to conduct a study on metal and emotion?**

ND: I've been friends with Mark Brandt, the UK editor of PureGrainAudio, for about eight years now, and we were discussing some ideas for

future think pieces. One of the ideas we discussed was an article that would look at how heavy metal affects its listeners emotionally.

Heavy metal is a genre of music that's treated with a certain kind of bemusement from a lot of psychologists. Every so often, a study pops up with newspaper headlines asking 'Why do people like heavy metal?' as if the writer is shocked to discover that people do actually like this loud, brash, noisy music and it's not just some weird joke or awkward rebellious phase their teenaged children are going through. Rarely, if ever, is a similar spotlight pointed at popular musicians like Ed Sheeran or Justin Bieber. So, we thought we'd ask the questions ourselves.

**AU: How did you get Cambridge University in on this?**

ND: Quite by chance, I discovered a survey on music and emotion, run by David Greenberg of Cambridge University. I reached out to him for some pointers on where I might find useful information for the article I was intending to write. He gave me some articles he'd written himself, and then suggested we might run a survey together. From there, it grew until we had the survey ready, and here we are.

**AU: Do you have a scientific background?**

ND: I don't have much of a scientific background – I studied History at Cardiff University – but I've always retained a healthy interest in the sciences. Biology and psychology were always the most fascinating to me as a way of understanding the world around me. I'm very interested to understand what makes people tick on a fundamental level.

**AU: What is Musical Universe?**

ND: Musical Universe is the survey apparatus that David developed for his own research into how people and music interact on a psychological level. [I]n essence, Musical Universe is a survey apparatus that examines in depth how your personal music tastes and your personality as a whole interact.

The initial aim for PureGrainAudio was to explore why heavy metal in particular can be so cathartic for its fans. What is it about a particularly

aggressive genre of music that allows for so deep an emotional effect in its listeners? But heavy metal is also a very diverse genre. There are myriad subgenres under its umbrella, from doom to thrash, black to goth, and so on. This means that simply asking, 'Why is heavy metal cathartic?' doesn't go far enough. Is it the lyrics? Is it the style of music? Is it the way the guitars sound? What is it about a particular subgenre that a particular metalhead finds cathartic? That's what PureGrainAudio is aiming to find out.

**AU: What kind of results are you expecting to find and what do you plan on doing with it?**

ND: Good ones! In all seriousness, I hope we find results that give us not only the answers to the questions I've mentioned, but open up further opportunities for study. Once we've found our answers, if they're statistically viable, we can

publish them for the wider scientific community to peruse and peer review.

**AU: Any other music science you plan on exploring?**

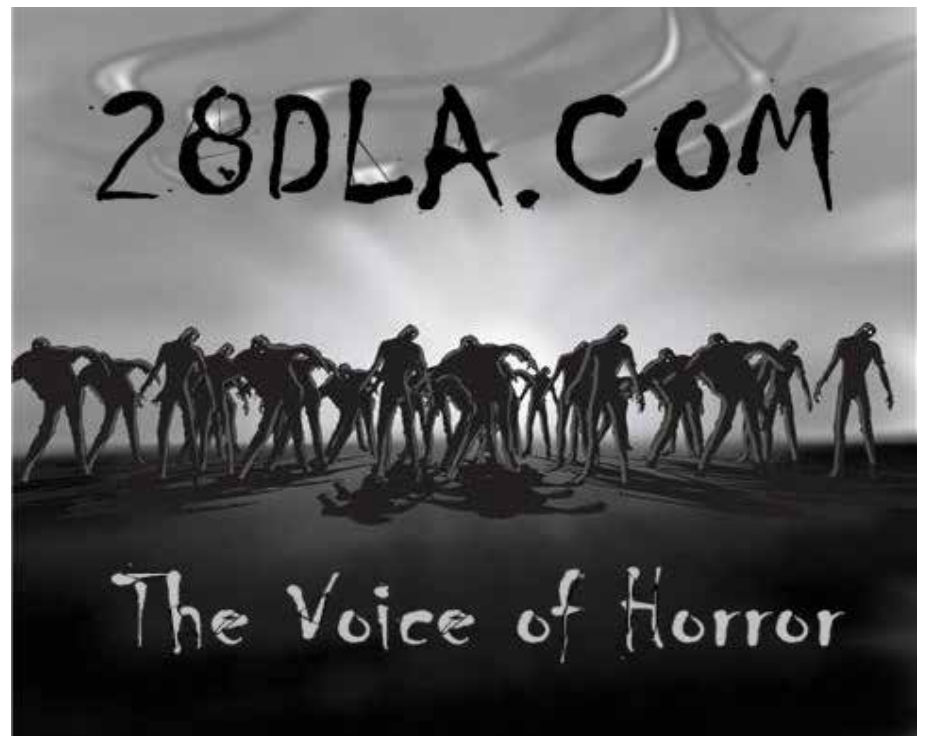
ND: Personally, I'd love to make this survey into a full neurological study on what goes on in the brains of metalheads when they listen to it, but that would require serious funding and access to equipment that I don't currently have. So, for now, I'll settle for a study on why people like Justin Bieber!

**AU: Famous last words?**

ND: That was fun!

*The metal and emotions survey is open to the public, accessible here: [cambridge.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_7aqWHdgQ19Cx5BP](https://cambridge.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7aqWHdgQ19Cx5BP)*

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Once, one agile thief attempted to assert a moral choice- that only the blood of committed evil would be taken to fuel the magis.

But as it turns out, the golden ratio of fate would have it otherwise; the ichor of innocence, ripe for the killing ground, works best.





## Shred Bundy

Interview by AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with and what are you most infamous for**

Shred Bundy: We are Shred Bundy, and we are the infamous butchers who bring stress, anxiety, and reality to your face. We bring out the real and dark imaginations that people try so hard to tuck away.

**AU: What was the genesis of Shred Bundy?**

SB: Shred Bundy started because we wanted to play music that we haven't heard before. Something new with an old twist.

**AU: Who's in the band, from any other bands of note, how would you describe each of the other members if you were writing their Tinder profile?**

SB: Shred Bundy came together to start a new path and history for each member. We ignore past bands as those were individuals who we do not identify with anymore. We do not use Tinder much, we would rather meet you at a show, but our profiles would probably describe us as mildly insane with a shit ton of stories ready to be told.

**AU: What is Shred Bundy all about?**

SB: Shred Bundy is all about playing music wherever we can go. We want people to release

all that anxiety and tension from their day-to-day lives. We will bring out the real you. You will be acting as if you were trapped in box all your life, feeling weightless and refreshed after one of our shows. We want our fans to face their real monsters and identify the toxic shit in their life, that way they can rid of it and feel hopeful to live another day.

**AU: What style of music is it? Can you describe your sound, for those of us who've never heard you before?**

**What exactly is California Killcore?**

SB: "California Killcore" is a genre we created to describe our unique sound and lyrical content. Killcore represents the rawness of



extreme metal and hardcore subgenres smashed into an unfiltered pathway of emotion at its peak.

**AU: What are some of the influences on your music?**

SB: Honestly, we have too many influences to even put on paper. The biggest influences we had during our sessions included Municipal Waste, Code Orange, Kreator, Magrudergrind, Xibalba, Obituary, Shattered Realm; we have some black metal influences and we especially love taking it back to older hardcore and crossover bands like Gorilla Biscuits, Cryptic Slaughter, D.R.I., Vision of Disorder and Madball. But again, we aimed to mix these elements into something new rather than try and recreate a sound we thought we liked.

**AU: What are some of the songs about?**

SB: We write songs that range from horror to real life experiences. It's based off what we feel at the moment and what we think people need to realize.

**AU: What's new in the Shred Bundy camp –**

**are you releasing music, touring, shooting any videos?**

SB: We will choose not to spoil anything. All we will say is that in the 2019/2020 year, Shred Bundy is going to be bringing our fans and new fans some new emotions to acknowledge.

**AU: What's the punk/metal scene like in Temecula, CA? Who are the wicked bands, and where are the good venues?**

SB: To be frank, the scene in Temecula changed greatly when the venues like The Vault, Galindo's and the Wheelhouse shut down. Those were the prime days when streets were flooded with chainsaw riffs and studded clothes. We had bands coming through sometimes three times a week, full packed with people having to listen outside. Times have changed now and we and other locals are trying to bring back days like those, so there really aren't many venues anymore, but collections of people have been putting together some killer house shows. Doesn't matter if it's an official venue, the heads of Inland Empire will get together and jam some good music.

**AU: Tell us about ReverbNation and how you won this feature and a full page ad in Absolute Underground - You guys beat out almost 1,800 submissions from other bands.**

SB: We honestly had no idea about this feature. It caught us completely by surprise since we have been around for barely a year and are still trying things out as a band.

**AU: I noticed you state you were into horror movies and gore - any obscure favourites to clue us into?**

SB: We don't favourite around here. Our taste comes from what we are feeling at the time. So it is best to leave it to the listeners' imagination.

**AU: Are any of your songs about specific horror movies?**

SB: No, we choose to write based off of real life events because the world itself is a horror movie.

**AU: Any favourite horror directors?**

SB: We all have many different favourites. But we



choose not to stick to one, because that narrows your vision and imagination and puts you in a box.

**AU: What are your plans for Xmas this year?**

SB: We have some final shows, and having three tours in 2018 will allow us to spend this break creating and preparing something new for our fans for the upcoming year.

**AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?**

SB: We are protectors of those who have felt horrible, dealt with horror, and those who have feared for their lives or lives of loved ones. We want people to acknowledge horrors for change, not for glory. We want people to know that we don't put up with shit like abuse and manipulation, and if you are one of those bastard sinners, we want you gone!

**AU: You should come up and tour Canada.**

SB: We love Canada, we did not even know we had some fans there! We would love to meet some of you and hopefully have some new fans afterward! We definitely will be planning some shows there.

**AU: Any final words for our readers in Canada huddled in their igloos?**

SB: Be yourself, take care of yourself and don't ever deny your identity and happiness for some asshole who does not matter!

<https://shredbundy.bandcamp.com/>

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## Psychostick

Interview by AU Editorial

**AU: Who are we talking with?**

Alex Dontre: Greetings! My name is Alex, I'm the drummer for Psychostick, and probably most infamous for my ridiculous alter-ego, Shwillex. He is a horrible person and I hope you never meet him. Fortunately, he only materializes when I'm unreasonably drunk, but then he proceeds to talk shit to everyone in the vicinity.

**AU: Give us a brief history of the band.**

AD: According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word "band" is a noun with several definitions, most notably "A small group of musicians and vocalists who play pop, jazz, or rock music." Furthermore, its origin is from, "Late Middle English: from Old French bande, of Germanic origin; related to banner."

**AU: You're just about to head out on tour to promote your new album, DO! Is that correct?**

AD: Indeed, we have been touring to support our ridiculous new album, *DO!* You can expect Psychostick in rare form. From my perspective, it's not really reaching out of our respective comfort zones, but rather, expanding the said comfort zone. Lyrically, it is a bit more fearless than previous releases, which is fun.



**surprise to fans – why the deception?!**

AD: The short answer is that we're all annoyed by pre-orders. A longer answer would involve an introduction to neuropharmacology, in which I did a bit of research for my master's in Business Psychology. (Hey, you asked!). Basically, there is a short window after receiving a favourable surprise in which people are more receptive to making spontaneous purchases if they can get an immediate benefit. So by making an album available strictly by purchasing on our online store but making it available NOW, a spritz of dopamine led to a more favourable attitude for purchasing from a neuromarking perspective. Blah blah blah, insert pedantic details...

**AU: Are there any cities on your roster that you're particularly looking forward to playing?**

AD: Yes! Several are particularly inviting, but I don't want to name them off and make the other towns sad. Instead, just pretend that I mentioned whatever your home town is and feel honoured.

**AU: What does the rest of the year have in store for you? More touring, videos, surprises?**

AD: More touring in different areas of the U.S. next. Also, more videos are definitely on their way as well. I can't tell you much more than that because the element of surprise is half the fun.

**AU: You are well known for the comedic, clever approach you take to your music. Do you think metal is taken too seriously these days?**

AD: I'm wearing a Hatebreed hoodie at this very moment as I type this. That said, do you think I listen to nothing but hardcore and metal every day? Of course not. Diversity is a very good thing. Specifically, the brain needs novelty to remain in optimal condition. (Don't worry, I won't go on another tangent about neuroscience). So my answer if metal is taken too seriously is no. I think bands who want to approach music from a serious and aggressive perspective should absolutely do so! I don't want to hear a Pig Destroyer album with acoustic love ballads. However, I also don't want to hear the same thing every single day. Accordingly, Psychostick composes comedic music to do something a little different, which I think is good for music as a whole.

**AU: Your live show is a riot – what's the importance of live performance to this band? What's the most insane thing that's ever happened at a Psychostick show?**

AD: The live show is a very important element to Psychostick! Not all songs are written to be live songs, but some of them certainly are. As for the most insane thing to happen...we once had a guy come to a show in Florida that was "snot-eating drunk." That's right, he was so drunk that he swiped a tissue out of Matty's hand right after he blew his nose into it (Matty was very sick that day). Then he proceeded to ruin my life by precariously holding it above his mouth, lowering it down into his disgusting teeth cave, and then chewing and swallowing it. Just horrible.

**AU: What do you all do when you're not playing music, or is Psychostick a full-time gig?**

AD: Psychostick is essentially full-time, but we all have additional projects as well. There are lots

of things going on outside of Psychostick, which includes guitar lessons from Josh and Matty, video game production from Rob and Josh, and lots of other crazy random stuff from each of us. Since graduating from university last year, I've been itching to get back into academics, so I have a presentation on goal framing that I'm giving at my alma mater, Franklin University, in October. I also recently wrote an article for a business psych newsletter on the evolution of the music industry, about how this is the best era in history for bands. I know that sounds odd considering all the bitching most people hear from musicians about it, but I backed it up with ample evidence. It's weird to me that no other industry on the planet (that I can think of) can get away with business leaders whining about economic obstacles. Innovate or die, bitches.

**AU: What are your hopes for the future of this band – any long term goals or aspirations?**

AD: My real aspiration is to continue to surprise people. If we don't do that, we won't have much staying power. If you mean milestones, I would very much like to play in places like Sri Lanka. Why Sri Lanka, you ask? We're a food band. I want to enjoy genuine Sri Lankan cuisine. Oh! Sudanese cuisine is excellent as well; we should tour there. As I understand it, Sudan and South Sudan have pretty dramatically different types of recipes, so we should probably play both. I just want something so ruthlessly spicy that I can't handle it. Is that unreasonable?

**AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?**

AD: I was born on a Tuesday! Our new album has a song about that glorious day of the week. It's important.

**AU: Any final words for our readers?**

AD: Just remember, kids, movie spoilers are never okay.

psychostick.com









## And You Thought You Were Normal: A Documentary Film About Nash The Slash

Interview By Aeryn Shrapnel

Ontario film makers Side Three Media take on the honourable task of compiling interviews and archival footage into a feature-length documentary about legendary Toronto musician Nash the Slash.

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Leanne Davies: I am Leanne Davies. I am a pop-surrealist painter and a producer currently working on the documentary *And You Thought You Were Normal*.

Tim Kowalski: My Name is Tim Kowalski. I'm co-director and a producer for *And You Thought You Were Normal*. I'm known to play bass in The Mean and other bands, [and have] directed music videos.

Kevan Byrne: My name is Kevan Byrne and I'm a film and TV editor and a musician with the band King Cobb Steelie. I'm also one of the co-directors of *And You Thought You Were Normal*. Am I infamous? I do have notoriously corrosive sweat.

**AU: What made you want to do a doc about the Canada's biggest weirdo, Nash the Slash? When did this project start?**

LD: I moved to Toronto in 1993 [and] I first saw Nash play live in a bar close to where I lived in the east end of Toronto around 1998. I was blown away by the complexity of his music, the psychedelic light show he created on stage and his penchant for all things gothic and macabre. In 2016 I painted his portrait for a show called Friends and Rockstars, and then in early 2017 I was contacted by Side Three Media who were just starting out on the project. They interviewed me as a fan of Nash. I became friends with the film's co-director Tim Kowalski shortly after that, and then through our conversations regarding our mutual love and respect for Nash, Tim charmed me into working on the film full-time. Ha! It's been fun.

TK: I grew up seeing Nash on TV as a kid in the 80s. He captured my imagination and planted a seed that has sprouted in very interesting ways over the years. Nash stood out in Canada... he was a mystery man among a sea of denim and maple syrup. Everything about him was contrarian, in a rock world dominated by guitar he played a tiny mandolin and violin through effects and came out the other end sounding monstrous! He bucked trends choosing to use a drum machine and bass pedals while singing and playing his

instruments or effects. May seem common now but he definitely was among the first electronic explorers... and he deserves his due. We started this project about two years ago. We've filmed close to 100 hours of interviews with more on the go. Whenever we talk to somebody new we get more contacts. Our list grows exponentially but it's an interesting list... it's a good problem to have!

KB: He's a musician that performed wrapped in surgical bandages for over 30 years!! That's why. I was attracted to the mystery and singularity of that. There had to be something interesting going on behind the gauze! I'm an editor so I'm always looking for a good story and this was a natural for me.

**AU: With Nash's death in 2014, How did you manage to get your hands on all of the old footage and other goodies you guys plan on using?**

LD: That's a great question! Nash's good friend Trevor Norris is someone he met in the early 2000s at Indie-Pool,

a CD manufacturing service for bands. They were friends for several years before Nash asked Trevor if he would become the executor of his estate and the keeper of his legacy. Side Three Media has entered into a licensing agreement with the estate and so we are in a very lucky and unique position where we have access to all of Nash's music, live recordings, and video footage. Trevor has been a huge help! We have also met several of Nash's collaborators. Paul Till who was Nash's photographer and Robert Vanderhorst the surrealist painter, for example, are just two of the people who have gone out of their way to help us by providing interviews, images, and donations to help us raise the funds for this film! Nash surrounded himself with very creative people, and many of them have helped us because they want to see their friend get his due.

TK: Yes, Trevor has been instrumental in helping us get content from Nash's archives and we've been lucky to work with many of Nash's collaborators as well! We've also secured exclusive live footage and photos from fans and pros alike through good old networking, emails and phone calls. Our database goes deep - we have recordings that go back as far back as Nash's childhood... not to mention the notorious Iggy Pop / Nash The Slash clip from Mike Bezzege! We intended to license more archival photos and footage when we reach our crowdfunding goal.

**AU: This film will be the first time many of his fans will learn about his homosexuality. How do you plan on weaving his story of identity with the story of his career?**

LD: Well, some of that you are going to have to wait and see what happens in the film! It wasn't until 1998 at a Pride performance here in Toronto that Nash declared his orientation. Homosexuality was illegal in Canada up until 1969, and yes, not all of his friends and collaborators knew he was gay.

TK: Without giving too much away, Nash had a very blue-collar, almost nerdy demeanour. He liked all things macabre, hung at the local bar, and always had his dog with him. Many of Nash's closest friends eventually knew about his orientation but he didn't want it to define him publicly until well after the era of bath-house raids and beatings in 80s-era Toronto. Nash's hiding his sexual orientation is just one element of his complex character. That's all I can say.

KB: Nash was queer. That's not a secret though it's probably not widely known. For most of his career he kept it private. There are a lot of reasons for that, not the least of which was the hostility to homosexuality in Toronto at the time. It was a really conservative city in the 70s and 80s. and it was dangerous to be openly gay. Interestingly, almost everyone we spoke to downplayed his sexuality. But if you dig a little deeper you realize



that nobody actually really knew Nash and his private life was deliberately kept hidden from ALL of them.

**AU: Are there any teasers you care to share with our readers?**

LD: Get ready for some amazing music, weird stories, and a calculation of how many rolls of bandages that guy used up!

TK: Like Nash with his hidden identity, we don't want to spoil the mystique. That said, we plan to go deep. We get inside of Nash's inner circle(s) and get to know those who were closest to him and why so many are devoted to him to this day. Nash surrounded himself with fascinating and colourful characters. It's like entering another world. I call it Nash-ville.

KB: There are some wild stories - biker gangs, exploding pumpkins, Roger Taylor, a dead sheep, grow-ops... and so much more!

**AU: Do you have any tips for young film makers out there?**

LD: Well I have some advice for any young artist, musician, or film maker—finish what you start! Even if you are uncertain about the direction your work is taking you, stick to it and get'er done!

TK: Now is a great time to get started. Realizing

new concepts has never been cheaper! Find your voice, stay true to your vision, don't be afraid to admit when you don't know something and partner with others who do, offer guidance and share your amount of passion for the project. Stay humble, enjoy creating!

KB: Don't worry about the gear, film school or your experience. Shoot it. Use your phone camera, write the script on napkins, cut with whatever you can get your hands on. A good story is the thing that matters most. Go and make something. It doesn't have to be perfect. Learn from your mistakes and move on.

**AU: Famous last words?**

"The man with no face, has no disgrace." — Nash The Slash

*And You Thought You Were Normal* is set to hit the screen in 2019 and Side Three Media's crowdfunding campaign may be your last chance at some killer Nash swag!

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## Claudio Simonetti's Goblin

Interview with composer Claudio Simonetti

By Ira Hunter

Transcribed by Trevor Lawrence Reid

Claudio Simonetti is a Brazil-born Italian composer who has specialized in the scores for Italian and American horror films since the 1970s.

Please read the following interview answers in an Italian accent.

### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?

Claudio Simonetti: Claudio Simonetti of Goblin. I'm here with my band Claudio Simonetti's Goblin. We are doing a tour, performing in the United States and Canada. We are doing *Suspiria - The Live Performance*. We play the music of *Suspiria* live during the screening of the film and a concert



when I finished the service, after one year and a half in military, we recorded some demos and started a band.

afterwards of the most famous themes of Argento's films. Also, George Romero's *Dawn of The Dead*.

### AU: When did you decide to be in a rock and roll band instead?

CS: My father was a very famous musician in Italy. He did a lot of soundtracks and TV shows so I grew up in music since I was born. I started playing piano when I was eight years old and started playing in bands when I was

14. At 15, I started playing guitar, thanks to the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.

[Later] I discovered that I preferred to play keyboards, when I listened to prog rock. My favourite band from that period, the one that most influenced me to return to keyboards was Procol Harum. They did "A Whiter Shade Of Pale," a famous song with an organ in the beginning. I said, "Wow, that's beautiful," and started playing

the piano again. I studied piano in music school. I still also played in rock bands, many, many small bands in Rome.

### AU: How did Goblin begin and when were you first introduced to director Dario Argento to start doing soundtracks for Italian horror movies?

CS: I met the guitar player Massimo Morante.... I had many bands, but I stopped playing for a time because I had to go into the mandatory military service. In Italy it was obligatory. During this period, I had just recorded some demos with Massimo and after

We called up Fabio Pignatelli and created a band before Goblin. The original name was Oliver, then we changed it to Cherry Five when we did a record. It was during the recording of Cherry Five in '74 that our producer was also the publisher of Dario Argento's films. He had a label but was also a publisher and he was doing the new film of Dario Argento called *Profondo Rosso*, [for the English title] *Deep Red*. And Dario asked him to have a rock band for the film. He said, "Let's call Deep Purple or Pink Floyd, people like that."

The producer said, "No, before you choose these big bands, listen to this band I'm producing in Italy." Dario came to the studio. We were very, very young. I was the oldest in Goblin and I was 22 years old. It was unbelievable.

He said, "Oh wow, I like these guys," so we wrote the soundtrack for *Deep Red*, *Profondo Rosso* and it was a big success. We sold more than four million copies of the album. It was incredible. It was one of the most high selling albums, on the top charts in Italy.

### AU: You guys seemed just to really click together and then you stayed with Dario Argento through several other movies?

CS: Oh yeah. In the beginning, it was just *Deep Red* and we recorded it in just ten days. There was not enough time to do the entire soundtrack. It originally had another musician, Giorgio Gaslini, a very famous jazz player. He started recording *Deep Red* but Dario said, "No, I don't want this. This music is too traditional and I want more."

Part of the film is Giorgio Gaslini, but the most important themes are written by us. For *Suspiria*, it was completely different. After two years, Dario did this film and said, "I want Goblin back again," but we did completely different music because *Profondo Rosso* and *Suspiria* are so different, no?

With *Suspiria*, he said, "I want something different because this is the first time I work with esoteric music." It's that type of film. We work with witches, actually you don't have any killer in the film except these ghosts or witches so he says, "I want music to make people feel scared. Even when they are just listening to the music and nothing appears on the screen." So we started recording and this time we stayed more than two months in the studio, recording and doing experimental [music].

### AU: Did the times influence the sound more in the future, like by the time you did the *Tenebrae* soundtrack?

CS: Yes, we have to change moods. Of course, every film is different. The next film with Goblin after *Suspiria* was *Dawn Of The Dead* and that was completely different. It was more rock and more something strange. We finished Goblin in 1978. We divided [broke up] the band and Dario called us again for *Tenebrae* but we could not use the name Goblin, we just used the names Simonetti, Morante and Pignatelli for *Tenebrae*, for the three of us. After that, I started my career as Claudio, doing *Demons*, *Phenomena*, *Opera* and all the other films.

### AU: One of the more recent Dario Argento films I saw was *The Card Player*.

CS: Oh yeah, I did *The Card Player*, I did *The Third Mother*, I did his *Dracula*. I did *Jennifer* and *Pelts* from *Masters of Horror*.

### AU: Cool! For *The Card Player*, it seemed like it was all digital or something. You did a different style again of that one.

CS: Yes, *The Card Player*, it's about a guy who works on the computer in a game of poker so the music is completely different. Technological, more electronic music. I loved electronic music. I started with electronic music in the 70s. Even *Suspiria* has a lot of electronic music inside it. I used a big Moog 55.

### AU: Anything new coming up on the horizon?

CS: We are working on a new album that we are going to release soon. We are going to work on it



now when we turn back to Italy and I think we will be releasing it in the first months of 2019. It'll be for Claudio Simonetti's Goblin. We finished with *Daemonia* about five years ago.

### AU: And *Daemonia* seemed to have more of a metal influence in it.

CS: With *Daemonia*, yes, we play the same stuff but with more energy. Now we more or less keep it the same as the Goblin original but maybe with just a little more energy because my musicians come from the heavy metal world.

### AU: What about the tour vinyl you just put out? *Music For A Witch*. Is that just for this tour?

CS: I like to present one special album just for this tour of America and Canada. On it you'll find the most important themes of the films and it's an album we'll release just for this tour. We have tour shirts too with all the dates on the back.

### AU: That's a lot of dates! You're going until December.

CS: Yeah, forty-one shows. This is the longest tour I've done in my life. Yeah, every date is coming in as sold out. I'm really surprised because after 41 years of *Suspiria*, I ask myself why people still love this film so much and why a lot of young people know it. I'm surprised and very happy for that.

### AU: Have you seen the new *Suspiria* remake?

CS: I haven't seen it and don't really know anything about it. Dario Argento was not contacted for this film and I don't know why.

### AU: That's insane.

CS: Yeah, it's insane.

### AU: And you should have been contacted, too.

CS: Thom Yorke, he wrote all new music, not using music from Goblin.

### AU: It didn't sound like it was inspired by anything.

CS: It's not easy to write music for a new film that has had important music like *Suspiria*. It's hard work.

### AU: Who is in the band with you now?

CS: It's Titta Tani, my drummer, and Bruno Previtali, the guitar player, both were *Daemonia* members. From February of 2018, we have a bass player Cecilia Nappo, she's an amazing bass player.

### AU: And you did a re-release or re-recording of the *Dawn Of The Dead* soundtrack?

CS: Actually, some parts are new and some parts were recorded many years ago so we put together with the new stuff. This is the new like with a little bit of different arrangement.

### AU: Have you heard of a place called Nilbog?

CS: No.

### AU: There's a bad horror movie called *Troll 2*. Directed by Claudio Fragasso. It was voted "The Best Worst Movie" [the name of a popular documentary about the film]. It's called *Troll 2* but it has no trolls in it, just goblins, and at one point the actor looks in the mirror and sees that the town's name, Nilbog, spells "Goblin" backwards.

CS: [laughs] That's funny.

### AU: Any plans to do a full Canadian tour one day?

CS: I would love to visit the entirety of Canada, you know but it's usually just Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto. This year we go to Winnipeg [instead of Vancouver] but there are many other places I would like to play there.

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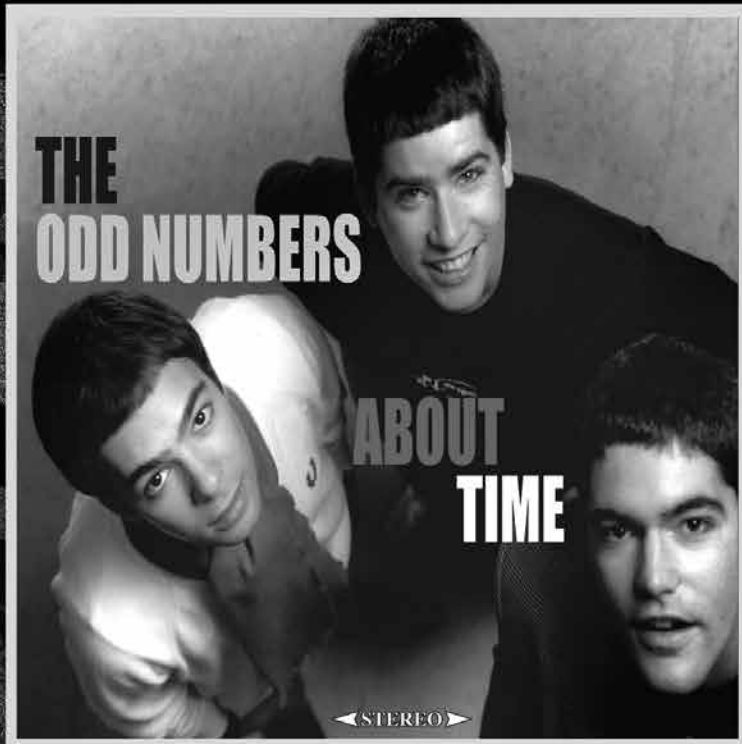
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## The Reaction: Early NFLD Punk Rock

By Frank Manley and Jason Flower

Based on interviews with Terry Carter and Mike Fisher

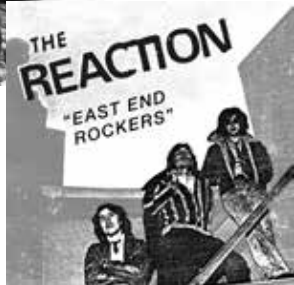
The mid-70s music scene in St. John's Newfoundland, the easternmost city in Canada, was really thin. Only a couple of underground rock/pop groups managed to release records in the first half of the decade. There were few places to play, almost no touring bands showed up, and only two or three stores offered vinyl, though very few imports. For musically ambitious kids, there weren't many options other than leaving for Toronto, home to dozens of clubs and the offices of major U.S. labels.

### For every action there's a reaction

Still, there were some hopeful local rumblings as youthful energy and amplified noise began to enter the music scene, gathering momentum from distant places. Mike Fisher recalls those days: "Rick and I were in The Grange doing

mostly hard rock and prog rock. We made some recordings with Wallace Hammond, who would go on to form Da Slyme at the end of 1977." With Fisher on bass and vocals and Rick Harbin on guitar, they laid down a number of tracks and, according to Hammond, a couple were borderline punk.

"But then I moved to Toronto in the late 70s and bashed around in a couple of top-40 bar bands. When I returned to St. John's in 1978, I reconnected with Rick and we started looking for a drummer."



The Reaction coalesced when Terry Carter spotted the ad Fisher and Harbin stuck on the wall in the Memorial University of

Newfoundland's Thompson Student Centre that fall. "Yeah, we were looking to play edgier, louder music at that point. Terry called us up and was the perfect choice as he'd helped found Da Slyme, who were as loud and obnoxious as you could imagine." Carter had just returned from broadcast school in Halifax where he'd been turned onto the raucous sounds of the Sex Pistols and the Ramones.

It was December 1978 and Carter was super eager to get back into the local music scene. After a few practices, the Reaction was born. Carter supplied their name from a line in the Jam's "All Around the World": "All over the country, we want a new direction / I said all over this land, we need a reaction / Well there should be a youth explosion..." Within a month they were playing at a theater-cast party at Memorial, opening for Da Slyme.

### Putting the live set together

Inspired by various Mod and other high-energy

bands, the Reaction built their set around covers of Eddie and the Hot Rods ("Do Anything You Wanna Do"), the Sex Pistols ("Anarchy In The U.K."), and Ian Dury and the Blockheads ("Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll"). As they had begun writing their own songs, they snuck in a few originals, including "The Kid's Arrived," "No Excuses," and the "Rest of It All." The last two songs were never recorded.

Gig-wise, as well as Memorial, they played Martha's Lounge and St. John's Middle Earth bar, fondly remembered as a scumpit. As they got rolling, they were hired to do the Bay Circuit, a tour of bars along the coast outside St. John's. Their energy was infectious to a small group of diehard fans. In the town of Old Shop near Trinity Bay, the Reaction stirred up a hornet's nest of local youths who'd been exposed to the Ramones. Whenever the Reaction played St. John's, the so-called "Old Shop Army" kids would pile into their cars and head for the gig.

### The Reaction kids arrived

Despite small pockets of support, it was tough being in the forefront of the new music scene. There was so much negativity and resistance at times that Carter penned "The Kid's Arrived" – which he says "is a bit of self-vindication – it's a big 'fuck you' to people who did nothing but criticize."

### A hate for school and religious repression

On Friday, February 9, 1979, they opened for Da Slyme at the Thompson Student Centre. The show was reviewed in The Newfoundland Herald TV Week five days later: "The night was nothing short of unadulterated (sometimes adulterated) madness... The Reaction played original materials such as 'On the Beach,' 'The Kid's Arrived' and 'No Excuses,' which carried themes about a hate for school and religious repression. In speaking with Terry Carter, drummer for the Reaction, he said 'I don't like politicians and I don't like interviews, so get off my back.'"

### The birth of the cool 45

They recorded their single ("The Kid's Arrived" b/w "On the Beach") at Echo Recording Studios in St. John's in early 1979. Fisher recalls "that Jack Windsor's studio was located in an attic above

his Echo Music store. He had a TEAC four-track, half-inch tape recorder and an older mixer with big volume pots."

The two songs they captured feature Rick on guitar, Terry on drums and percussion, and Mike on bass and vocals.

While they were eagerly awaiting to receive the records, Mike and Terry each designed a different picture sleeve, making only 50-75 of each. One was a printed pocket sleeve and the other was a foldover photocopied sleeve. The single quickly made it into local jukeboxes, including the one at the Middle Earth. Distribution was DIY, including selling it at gigs and on consignment at St. John's longstanding vinyl emporium, Fred's Records.

### Exit Terry, enter Dan

With Terry out, Harbin and Fisher recruited Dan Ralph and continued gigging and writing.

The band hadn't lost any of its youthful vigour and was still pissed off on many fronts. "Yeah, that's why we wrote 'East End Rockers' – to express our frustrations," declares Fisher.

The Reaction played all over Newfoundland from November 1979 to April 1980, even making it as far as Halifax. In early 1980, they were filmed in a local cable television studio cranking out six songs, many about the frustrations of growing up in an isolated place with a community more interested in its past than its future.

### Young punkers, heading west

In May 1980, the band moved to Toronto to explore new live and studio opportunities. While playing a few shows there, at venues such as the Ontario College of Art, they wrote and recorded three songs. But success in Canada's music capital eluded them, so by 1981 they were back in St. John's. Mixing up the format, they added keyboard player Stephen Jackson, who brought a electro-synth/Euro-beat flavour to their live shows. They played their final gig on Saturday, June 13, 1981.



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# Absolute Metal



## RAVEN

### Still Hard

Interview with John Gallagher (bass & vocals) and Mark Gallagher (guitar)

By Ira "Hell Patrol" Hunter

#### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Mark Gallagher: My name's Mark Gallagher and I'm infamous for causing trouble.

John Gallagher: My name's John Gallagher and I'm a stunt gynaecologist from the planet Venus.

Mark Gallagher: I'm not a gynaecologist but I'll take a look.

#### AU: Take me back to the origins of Raven in 1974.

MG: We were fans of heavy metal and rock and just stupid kids who said, we could be in a band, we could do that. I remember we used to play records like super loud, and just pretend that we were playing the gig, to see if we could actually keep up with these bands. We didn't play any instruments, we'd play a tennis racket basically, that's how I started.

JG: We were fans of the bands like Status Quo, Sweet, Slade and then we started listening to Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, and just wanted to play loud, fast, crazy music.

#### AU: You guys are known as pioneers of thrash and speed metal.

MG: I guess we wanted to kick it up a notch, we just try to do our best and make everything count. We're really excited right now, with a new drummer Mike Heller (Fear Factory/Malignancy)... it's like a new chapter for the band. It's like everything now is like super fast, it's a little bit more like the early days. I'm really excited because we recorded the album already and we have a live album that's coming out, unlike anything we've ever done. It's snapshot of us touring. It has a lot of aggression, fast, crazy shit. A lot of older songs, which I think some fans will dig, and a couple of new things we're doing. Of course we're still performing *ExtermiNation*, this is the last few gigs of a gigantic three-year tour.

#### AU: How did the whole origin of Athletic Rock come about?

MG: Most of the time because we would jump around and smash ourselves up and jump off the stage, jump on top of the amps and all that stuff, but we'd get hurt, so we started to wear these little pads and stuff, knee pads so you can slide across the stage. That's how it started. Some guy who worked for us called us Athletic Rock. They keep coming up with this stuff, like we've been billed as heavy metal, thrash metal, godfathers of thrash, speed metal, power metal, it's like okay, whatever. We're actually Raven, that's the name of the band.

#### AU: Being from England, how did you know about hockey gear?

MG: We watch hockey in England, are you kidding me? We just watch it for the fights, that's what most Canadians do, they won't admit it, because there's not a lot of technique to just punching him in the face.

#### AU: So is there a new album in the works, other

#### than the live album?

MG: The studio album is recorded, we're just in the middle of mixing it. We're going to probably put the live album out in January, and then the studio album will come out later this summer. But it's all with Mike Heller playing drums, and I think it's a new fresh approach, it's a kick up the butt.

JG: We definitely took a lot of stuff to the next level as far as technical proficiency. But the



songs are still catchy, they're melodic as well, it's just kind of like the album you would have imagined after *Wiped Out*, in a more modern context.

AU: Being brothers, how does that dynamic help you guys?

MG: A lot of it is that we're like-minded, we have the same interests, we want to make it a certain way. So we cut to the chase a little bit. Obviously just like any relationship, we have ups and downs, but most of the time, it's about the music. We're really enthusiastic about playing and make a point of going out and hanging with the fans, it keeps you grounded and keeps you realizing why you're doing it.

JG: It's in our blood. Our sister said, "Are you guys crazy?! You're still doing it?" It was almost like our mother, "Are you going to get a proper job?" It's like, jeez, no we're not.

#### AU: What was the Newcastle scene like back in the day?

JG: We used to play these little clubs that were called working mans' clubs, and at that time, we see this poster that said Judas Priest and we were like, "Who the hell is that?" Because they went before us, and at the same time as us there was a poster for a band called Son Of A Bitch, which went on to be Saxon. Just recently we played with Saxon on tour and we were talking about the old days.

#### AU: And you guys took Metallica out on their first tour, they opened for you?

MG: That's right, *Kill Em All For One* tour... it was our third album and their first record, and funny enough we both had a song called "Seek and Destroy". They were a bit different... they were like thrash and extreme, so a lot of places people didn't like them at the time. We were happy to have a band that was really kicking ass playing with us.

#### AU: Then a while ago, Metallica had you come and open for them?

MG: Yeah we got invited to play a show in South America, in São Paulo in a stadium that was like 80 000 people. It was the biggest gig we've ever done. We turn around and James Hetfield is on stage with a camera taking pictures of us, and we were goofing around, so that made us play even longer.

#### AU: What about the retrospective DVD that you did, *Rock Until You Drop – A Long Day's Journey*?

JG: That was Mark's baby, he collated all the material, we had a lot of old footage. But it turned into a bit of a nightmare because they were all on five or six different formats, it took him months.

MG: I did most of the stuff myself it was a lot of work. But I think it's gonna tell the story of Raven. For a lot of people who don't know Raven, they can check it out and see all the different twists and turns.

#### AU: What can you tell me about your experience on 70 000 Tons of Metal, the metal cruise ship.

JG: We've always had the greatest time, we were on the first one in 2011, and in 2014, and also 2016. It's just a lot of fun, we get to meet the fans

and hang out.

MG: You've gotta at least do it once, it's a giant ship full of metalheads, all drunk and going crazy, and some great bands.

#### AU: The *Party Killers* cover album you did, what were some of the songs?

MG: Well that was an interesting project because we wanted to make something special for the fans. It's a real odd mix of songs. And it's only available for people who want to support the band, and we made it like that, we've never sold it anywhere else.

MG: It was basically a Kickstarter but I also think we made something special. We're going to do another *Party Killers* because it was a lot of fun! We could do like really strange, odd songs. We want to do something that's a little deeper and off the beaten track, you know?

#### AU: What can people expect from the live show tonight?

MG: Pain! We're on top of our game, we've been touring for like three months, so we're crazy, we're really fucking kicking ass, it's a well oiled machine. You're going to see a band that's like, in their prime really. Most bands who have been around this long, it's just like here's a few songs from the old days, and that's it. But we bring it every night,



it's 100%. Somebody at the last gig said, "I liked the gig but my face hurts from smiling so much!" That's like the best review we could want! So it's going to be heavy.

#### AU: Final words for Canadian fans of metal?

MG: Thanks to all the fans in Canada for supporting us all through the years, you know who you are! We'll be coming back here more than ever and we'll be looking for you so come down and have a good time.

JG: Thank you for supporting us and we're not going to let you down! There's going to be some really cool Raven music for you coming out very soon!

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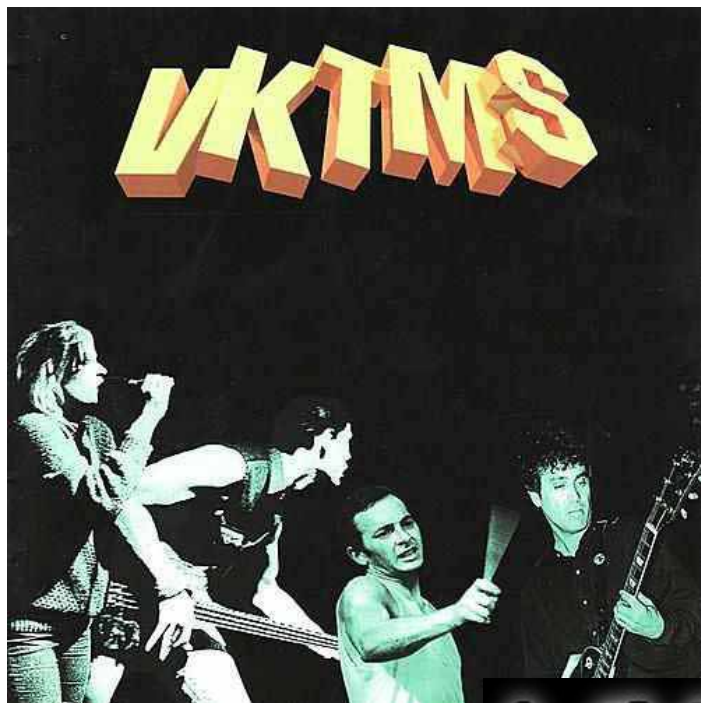
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## San Francisco Punk VKTMS

Interview with drummer Lou Gwerder  
By AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Have you been around the San Francisco punk scene for a long time? Who are we talking to?**

Lou Gwerder: Yes. Lou of the VKTMS.

**AU: I just came from Canada. I need to know what I have missed this whole time.**

LG: When were you born?

**AU: '75. My dad was a hippy down here.**

LG: Well you would have been three years old in the Broadway scene. The Mubahay Gardens. That's

**AU: How did the punks mix with that?**

LG: Well what happened was there was a Filipino supper club. Some promoters took it over, and said we need to make some money, and made it into a punk rock club. Like CBGBs kind of. So they would have like four bands a night.

**AU: Okay, so it wasn't the mellow hippy scene.**

LG: This was post hippies, it was like '75-'78.

**AU: What was influencing the San Francisco scene?**

into hippies, and the hippies turned into punks. It was the same neighbourhood.

**AU: Was there some drug influence in the music?**

LG: A lot of people had day jobs, and the first show didn't start until 11:00. You figure it out. People were working late, and it was during Reagan, too. There was a lot of protesting.

**AU: The show tonight, Linda XYZ's birthday. Tell me about that.**

LG: You saw some good characters up there. A bit of a super group.

**AU: Did you perform tonight?**

LG: No.

**AU: You could have jumped on drums tonight!**

LG: No, I'm not that kind of drummer. I'm more like an art rock drummer. I stick with the same band for a long time.

**AU: Which is?**

LG: VKTMS

**AU: Do you guys still perform?**

LG: Well we had been but we had some deaths of the spouses of the band. Also, it's not the original original band. The original band was '78, and we did that for four or five years and then we came back in the 90s, and then we came back again...

**AU: Final words for Canadian fans who are just learning about San Francisco punk.**

LG: All I know is there were some bands from Vancouver who were very influential to me. Like Pointed Sticks, they would come through the Mabuhay. Kick ass drummers, unbelievable band. One of the guys, Zippy Pinhead, was a disciple of one of the drummers for the Pointed Sticks. I think the Pointed Sticks drummer had taught all these guys. I guess he was the guru or something and unfuckingbelievable drumming came out of that whole scene. I was just flabbergasted, they

inspired me. It wasn't thrash hardcore, it was just good punk. It wasn't thrashy, but the whole essence of punk. The Pointed Sticks, and D.O.A. I love Joey Shithead. Joey is like a god to me. Such a good man.

**AU: Randy Rampage, original bass player just**



**passed away. So everyone is pretty affected by that back home.**

LG: That's sad. Those guys are world famous. Joe is a road dog. Those guys are on the road a lot, and you can tell. Let me tell you about another band from the Mabuhay called The Original Joes and they had the same sort of thing as D.O.A., go hell bent, no boundaries.

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# COMING SPRING 2019



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## BEER CITY

skateboards / **RECORDS**

### Beer City

By Mike Beer

Photo Credit Fraser Thomson

Beer City turned 25 in 2018; it's been a very busy year. 25 is quite a milestone and we couldn't have gotten this far without all of you. So first off, a big thank to everyone for your support. We started the year off by expanding our skate team. We put Mark Hubbard, Scott Smiley, Davey Rogers and Dave 'Shag' Palmer on the roster and gave them pro models. Unfortunately Hubbard did not get to see his; at least not in our state of being, but we know he is stoked on the result and on the rekindle. Talk about leaving behind a legacy. Hubbard not only left behind 421 skate parks that his company Grindline had built, but also inspired hundreds of thousands of people to build their own DIY creations all over the world. Not to mention all the DIY spots he was instrumental in building himself. Thanks Marty you will be missed!

Our two ams, Stemps and Nick Mistele, have been quite busy themselves. All through the year, they have been skating hard and giving generous donations of blood and skin to the concrete. That's just the price you pay, or as Mistele put it, "I'm rolling around in bum piss and all kinds of other stuff."

On the record label side of things, we have also been quite busy. We hooked up with San Jose's Odd Numbers and reissued their first full length, *About Time*. Most people that skateboarded back in 1990 will recall this music was the soundtrack for the 'New Deal' promo video. Then most of the



tracks on New Deal's first official video, 'Useless Wooden Toys' and their next one '1281', included songs by The Odd Numbers. Our reissue of *About Time* is the first time it came out on vinyl and the CD version contains a bonus track. Of course, you can download it and stream it from all legit digital platforms, too. We also cleaned the recording up some and remastered it, so it sounds its best ever. The Odd Numbers are planning on touring in

spring, so they may be in your area soon. The other release we put out this year was a

special gatefold 2XLP by Deathwish called *Rock N Roll's One Hell of a Drug*. It contains both their previous albums, *Out For Blood* and *Unleash Hell* on this special gatefold edition that's limited to 666 copies! To promote this limited edition release, Deathwish is on a US gulf coast tour with D.R.I., as we write this! Deathwish also toured with D.R.I. earlier this year, as well as doing a tour of Japan this summer. They have a lot of plans for next year, including writing a new record as well as

touring.

Next year is going to be a good one. We're going to be adding more riders to the team and also plan on doing some skate trips. We are currently working on getting footage so we can come out with a new video hopefully sometime late next year. Who knows, a tour may also happen.

You're most likely hearing it here for the first time, but we will be reissuing the entire Adrenalin O.D. back catalog, completely restored and remastered, with plenty of bonus material some never before released. We also just signed a very intense dark thrash metal band called Population Control. They will be going into the studio next year to record



a full length. More on both those bands next time! Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year from the Beer City Boyz!

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# Absolute Live Reviews

## Monster Magnet

Commodore Ballroom, Vancouver, BC

Oct 9th, 2018

The Monster Magnet show in Vancouver was awesome, a mindfucker indeed, one for the ages! Only the second time in 20 years they have been back to Vancouver and they did not disappoint. They fucking killed it from the first note to the last. What an incredible show, pure eargasm for one and a half hours. I had a fever and their brand of stoner rock was the cure baby, seriously.

Opening the show with a blistering “Dopes To Infinity,” they never let up from there. It was one big fuzzed out, blissful trip to Planet Wyndorf, and what a setlist it was, they played songs I have not seen them play since 1993. For me, a long time fan, whose favorite album by them is *Superjude*, I completely lost my mind when they played “Twin Earth,” and “Dinosaur Vacuum.” What an absolute thrill to see those early MM classics performed again. They played three new songs off their latest masterpiece, *Mindfucker*. The title track, “Rocket Freak,” and “When The Hammer Comes Down,” all went over very well with the crowd. But it was the classics like “Dopes,” “Spacelord,” “Negasonic Teenage Warhead,” and “Powertrip” that really fired up the diehards. Coming out for an encore with a brilliant 13.5 minute version of “Spine Of God,” then ending with “Powertrip” was the perfect way to finish the show. And at much as I love the original lineup, this current five-piece lineup is by far the best this band has ever sounded live. Just a well-oiled machine, so fucking tight! It was like listening to the freakin’ records, they were that great.

As well as Dave being on fire all night and being one of the best rock ‘n roll preachers in the game, I have to give praise also to drummer Atomic Bob Pantella, who just brought the thunder down Jack! Garrett Sweeney is a solid rhythm guitarist who always delivers, and longtime MM guitarist Phil Caivano was just outstanding, he slayed the entire show. Ed Mundell is missed, but Phil’s playing more than makes up for his absence. And newest addition to the band since 2013, bassist Chris Kosnik is a solid bassist and very fun to watch. All in all, another club show that ranks up with the best I have ever seen. I cannot wait to see the mighty Monster Magnet again.

Spacelord forever motherfuckers!

-Jason Maher

## Michale Graves

Argyle Goolsby

Nim Vind

Momy Fortuna

Pub 340 - Vancouver, BC

Oct 12th, 2018

Presented by Stable Genius and the Invisible Orange

Michale Graves, who made his mark on Misfits albums

*American Psycho* and *Famous Monsters*; our local horror punk hero Nim Vind, and Argyle Goolsby of Blitz Kid banded together this fall for an impressive 50 show run around North America, and in October they shared an intimate stage at Pub 340. The three solo acts collaborated throughout the night to help provide each of them a full band for each set. This created a cool dynamic for a full and intimate show throughout the night.

Most notable for me was Argyle Goolsby, who I was the least familiar with out of the three. He perched on top of his mic stand like a vulture channeling some Lestat-like energy with fangs that somehow didn’t come across as overly cheesy, and lurched into the crowd pulling out various props throughout his set. He delivered a high energy and engaging performance the entire way through, and he even ended his set with a couple of crowd pleasing Blitzkid hits including “Let’s Go To The Cemetery.” I found him really entertaining and it was a unique performance to watch with some great music to boot.

Michale Graves appeared to a packed room with his signature skull face paint and belted out a solid set with a good balance of his solo work and Misfits tunes. I’m a big fan of Graves-era Misfits because there is no denying that he has a great voice. When he was finishing up his set, he announced that he wanted to meet everyone in the room, and stood true to his offer meeting anyone who wanted a photo, autograph, or quick exchange at the end of the night. This is something multiple friends had told me about his shows, and I find it’s genuinely awesome to see that he values his fans enough to make that time, especially given the amount of shows they’ve got going on with almost no time off in between. I may never want to talk politics with the guy, but I’m glad I got to see him and hear some of my favourite songs at one of my favourite local dives.

-Tara Zamalynski

## Unleash The Archers

Striker

The Rickshaw Theatre, Vancouver B.C.

October 14, 2018

The Rickshaw was packed with metalheads looking to take in a night full of good ol’ Canadian heavy metal. Unleash The Archers and Striker were both in the mood to party for this was the last night of a thirty-five date tour that stretched deep into the US and then all the way back to Vancouver for some on-stage vodka shots.

Striker got right down to it by unleashing their signature brand of metal anthems. Whether it was speed metal catastrophes or headbanging motivations to return to your former glory, they kept the mosh pit singing along



as well as swirling like a sea of flailing hair. Nothing appeared premeditated during their set, as each member ripped through the classics like “Out for Blood” and “Born To Lose” until they all were dripping with sweat. Though out to promote their new release *Play To Win*, the band stuck to older material, but did feature a few new tracks that fit right in with their unforgettable Iron Maiden-meets-Metallica aesthetic. The guitar solos were epic and the melodic beauty of their songs lit up the venue proving the tried and tested leather clad alcohol-fueled bro-chant still has wings. To break the seething metal-ness a little bit Unleash The Archers materialized on stage to sounds of an electronic dance intro.

Brittney Slaves and company clearly had something different to offer the longhaired crowd. The operatic folk-death metal sounds filled the room like thousands of archers assembling in some epic scene from *Lord Of The Rings*. While the rest of the dudes in the band crushed their way through the bombastic riffage the suitably elf-ish lead singer wailed away providing vocal pyrotechnics strong enough to break every beer patrons glass if they weren’t drinking out of a dixie cup or can.

Decked out in a blackened gothic archer’s costume, Brittney danced around like a freed handmaiden from the dark ages celebrating with tracks off the bands recent release *Apex*. Her headbanging was truly contagious, as she managed to get fellow hooded archers in the audience to swing their hair like they just don’t care and in unison, I might add. They followed her and the band to the apex with slamming tracks like “Ten Thousand Against One” and slowed it down for some intriguing misery with “Dream Crusher.” It was a night of true leather enchantment.

-Dan Potter

## Cypress Hill

Fortune Sound Club, Vancouver, BC

October 17th 2018

“I want to get high, so high!”

The opening line from Cypress Hill’s 1993 song ‘I Wanna Get High’ is a sentiment simple enough that even a bunch of adolescent misfits, such as my friends and I at the time, could understand that it was a battle cry worth rallying around. It was a battlecry for a war between Reagan-era propaganda and truth. A war between stubbornness and creativity. A war between the establishment and the unestablished, and Cypress Hill was at the helm, bongos and blunts all ablaze.

Now, take a weed-addled quantum leap to October 17th 2018 at Fortune Sound Club and it was hazy, very hazy, yet still clear. We have won the battle.

This night marked the long awaited “freeing of the weed” in Canada and what better way than a headlining performance by the godfathers of the cannabis legalization movement; Cypress Hill. In recent years frontman B-Real has been working with DNA Genetics, an equally important player in the cannabis industry, who alongside Canopy Growth were the big sponsors of the show. The slogan of the night was, “We were all there on Day One,” an ode to those who have been championing cannabis legalization all along.

Once inside our anticipation was met with the opening acts; DJ Kookum and DJ Marvel Of The Freshest. Through the hippie fog I heard tales of magical tokens that were as elusive as Easter eggs; but once found would grant you entry through the rabbit hole into a secret room in the venue filled with doughnuts, candy, and make believe. If you were lucky enough you might have even caught a glimpse of a live interview with *High Times Magazine*.

The set list was full of classic songs you would expect to hear including “How I Could Just Kill A Man,” “When The Shit Goes Down,” and the opener, “Weed Medley,” which strung together such hits as “Dr. Greenthumb” and “Hits From The Bong.”

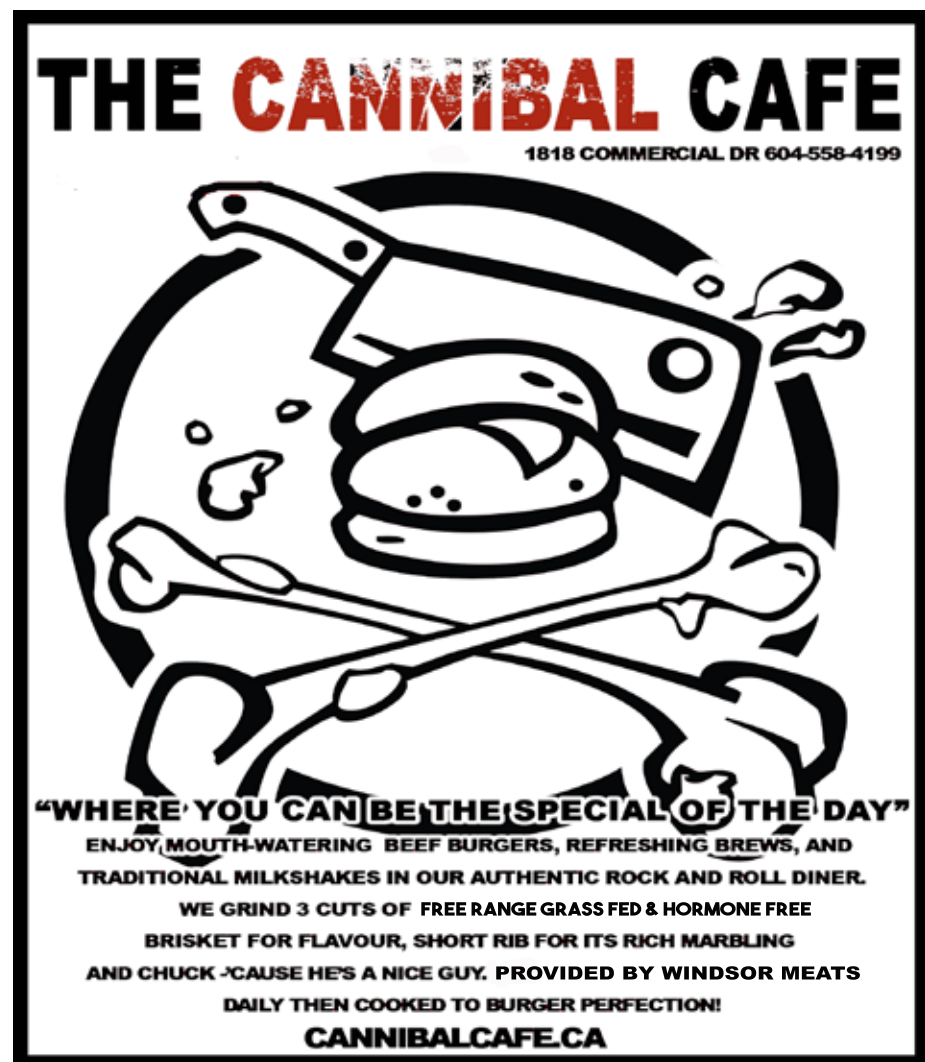
They also played contemporary hits like “Put ‘Em In The Ground” from their newest album, *Elephants on Acid*. Released at the end of September, the 21-song album is the first new release from Cypress Hill in eight years. It also marked the return of DJ Muggs, the producer behind seven of their albums, recreating the quintessential sound fans have come to expect from the group. The last song of the night also came from the new album. “LSD (outro),” an extended mix on the thirty seven second interlude that mingles trumpeting elephants and haunting circus piano for the perfect come down from a truly psychedelic experience.

However, it was the second-to-last song, the timeless hit, “Insane in the Brain” that was the pinnacle of the night. The house erupted with a plume of smoke and everyone danced towards the stage like the floor was on fire. It truly felt like I was back with my teenage friends watching Cypress Hill during the height of their commercial success.

-Bella P Cuffley



Photo Credit: Ryan Johnson





**MC50**  
**Starcrawler**  
**The Vicious Cycles**  
**Commodore Ballroom, Vancouver, BC**  
**Oct 17, 2018**

Vancouver had a lot to celebrate on October 17th as recreational cannabis became legalized and the legendary Commodore Ballroom played host to the MC50 presents the Kick Out the Jams tour. MC5 founding member Wayne Kramer (lead guitar, vocals) was joined by guitarist Kim Thayil (Soundgarden), drummer Brendan Canty (formerly of Fugazi), bassist and vocalist Dug Pinnick (King's X), and additional lead vocals from Zen Guerrilla frontman Marcus Durrant in celebrating the 50th anniversary of their influential 1968 debut *Kick Out the Jams*, and the release of his memoir, *The Hard Stuff: Dope, Crime, the MC5 and My Life of Impossibilities* (Da Capo Press).

The Vicious Cycles opened up to a home crowd and got things going with a tight, high energy set with sounds probably well familiar to any of the wide range of ages represented in the audience. Next up was the highly anticipated Starcrawler from Los Angeles, featuring the charismatic yet dysmorphic Arrow de Wilde. Andy Warhol famously said, "Art is what you can get away with," and I am reminded that rock and roll can still revolt.

Last but not least, after opening with a searing rendition of "Rambling Rose," it was time to Kick Out the Jams as Kramer and company took to the stage to a wildly enthusiastic crowd containing many notable members of Vancouver's historically rich music scene. The set continued with favourites such as "Shakin' Street," "Call me Animal," "Over and Over," a particularly punk rock version of "Rocket Reducer No. 62," and "High School," (a tad ironic for an albeit sprightly man of approximately 70). Interestingly included were covers of Sun Ra's "Outer Spaceways Incorporated" and (my favourite) Them's "I Can Only Give You Everything," showing Kramer's influences are as wide ranging as his own proved to be over the decades. The best song of the night was the encore, "Sister Ann." With



Photo Credit: Aeryn Shrapnel

the exception of Marcus's sweat-soaked, transported performance on lead vocals (evoking memories of long forgotten good gigs), the supporting members of the band seemed content to step back and enjoy the experience of sharing the stage with one of the most unsung yet influential figures in the history of punk rock, who after fifty years, some good tokes, and perhaps a six pack (of only Budweiser products? C'mon, Commodore), can still sock 'em out for us.

-Leanne Horan

**The Dead Boys**  
**Pat's Pub, Vancouver, BC**  
**Nov 10, 2018**

The Dead Boys played Vancouver on Nov.10th @ Pat's Pub on Hastings. I was very surprised they were playing this tiny bar, but it made it all the more fun and intimate for the fans who attended. Original members guitarist Cheetah Chrome and drummer Johnny Blitz resurrected the legendary Cleveland band in 2017, just in time to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the classic *Young, Loud & Snotty* album from '77.

And what a show it was, absolute killer gig. They were just as loud, sleazy, and raw as they ever were. I wasn't sure what to expect when



I first heard the band had reformed. I mean, how could they reunite without Stiv Bators? But to my surprise, they still sound fucking great! After seeing videos of some of their recent performances, and after hearing their re-recorded *Still Snotty: Young, Loud & Snotty at 40* album, I was absolutely sold, and if you were ever a fan, you will be, too. New singer Jake Hout does a fantastic job of carrying on the legacy and spirit of Stiv. Cheetah always said he wouldn't reform the band, as there was no replacing Stiv. That is until he discovered Jake from a Dead Boys tribute band and heard him sing. He is the closest you will ever see and hear to the real deal, trust me.

They opened with the blistering "Sonic Reducer," and it was on from there. They played everything I wanted to hear and I am sure what everyone else there wanted. "All This & More," "Ain't It Fun," "Ain't Nothin To Do, Not Anymore," "What Love Is," "Caught With The Meat In Your Mouth," "Son Of Sam" and many more were played. Cheetah and Johnny have not lost a thing, they both still bring it, as much as they ever did in their CBGBs heyday. I do wish that the other two original members, Jeff Magnum and Jimmy Zero had of taken part. But they didn't want to play, and new members Ricky Rat & Jason Kottwitz do a commendable job taking their places.

All in all, another amazing gig, one for the ages. If you get a chance to see this band live, go, you won't regret it. In their second go around, they have come for us children once again. From all the band members' mouths, new music is definitely on its way, Ain't It Fun, the Boys are back! I just hope they stick around a little longer this time.

-Jason Maher

**Raven**  
**The WISE Hall, Vancouver, BC**  
**November 11, 2018**

When Raven returned to Vancouver in 2018, so did I, and the Wise Hall was the designated area for this round of metal mayhem. Before that would go down, there were

four opening bands to check out that I wasn't familiar with.

First up was Piraña, a thrash band from Mexico who had been a late addition to the bill. This was their first time playing in Vancouver and they were obviously really excited to be here. Their brand of vicious old school thrash sounded great and set things off in the right direction. Hopefully this won't be the last time they come around these parts. I'd love to see them play another concert.

Next up was Hellchamber. I've discovered and thoroughly enjoyed so many great local bands within the last few years and now these guys are the latest one. They provided a nice musical change of pace after the aggressive straight up thrash pummelling that I enjoyed receiving from Piraña. As it was Remembrance Day, vocalist Garth Allen made a point to dedicate one of their songs to all the veterans, including those fighting in wars that many of us may not necessarily understand or agree with. I'll definitely have to listen to more of their music in the near future.

The third band of the night was Mobile Deathcamp, who were also making their Vancouver debut. When you get multiple opening bands playing over several hours, it's inevitable that at some point, one of those bands will manage to change the overall mood and get you more engaged in what's happening on stage. On this night,



Mobile Deathcamp was that band for me. This trio from Toledo set the musical direction back to a more extreme metal route, and delivered it in such a satisfying way that I started to regret not hearing them sooner.

The final opener was Extinction AD, and even before they played a note of their music, we knew these guys weren't here to fuck around. Song after song, they used all vocal chords and instruments to sonically attack whatever it was that pissed them off. As they forced their thrash metal sound - armoured with old and new musical influences - through the PA system, they also called for all of us to gather at the front and join in the aggression with a raging circle pit. I certainly did my part by getting up front and banging my head and I wasn't the only one. We really did like you guys.

Now everyone was worked up for the main event. Being the experienced professionals they are, they came out swinging with an effective combination of old standards like "Take Control," "Hell Patrol," "All For One," "Rock Until You Drop," and older songs that haven't been played live before like "Hung, Drawn & Quartered." They also showed off newer songs like "Destroy All Monsters" from their last album "Extermination" and premiered a track called "Top Of The Mountain," which will be released on their upcoming album next year.

At some point during this first half of the set that old Raven formula was starting to manifest itself in the crowd. The sonic circular madness, which required a response to their well crafted combination of raw energy and technical execution, drove two members of the crowd to attempt stage diving. They somehow managed to completely miss anyone who could catch them and crashed to the ground, and that was before Raven even played "Crash Bang Wallop."

This act of recklessness did seem to get a rise out of them and give an extra boost, not that they seemed to really need it from how well they had been playing up to this point. Part of the reason for this was the recent addition of drummer Mike Heller, who according to the Gallagher brothers, had immediately injected high energy into the band after joining them last year. Everything was going right as they continued playing more classic tracks like "Faster Than The Speed Of Light," and "Mind Over Metal."

This wouldn't be a Raven show without guitar and bass solos, complete with varying degrees of slower melodic moments mixed with frenetic shredding. Never going too long; always carrying the momentum along instead of being run over by it. They finished us off with "On and On," "Break The Chain," which included a medley with songs they didn't write, and of course, "Crash Bang Wallop."

It reminded me of how I felt when I first heard *Live At The Inferno*, and how that was exceeded by every Raven show I attended after that. Of those three concerts, I honestly think this Wise Hall gig was the best one. Pretty damn good for a band that has been rocking this hard for this long.

-William Liira

[theliiratimes.wordpress.com](http://theliiratimes.wordpress.com)

**Fu Manchu**  
**The Rickshaw Theatre, Vancouver, BC**  
**Nov 11th, 2018**

Last night on Upper East Hastings Wasteland, the Rickshaw Theatre hosted Fu Manchu once again. The fuzz-wah masters from Orange County, California hit the stage, and immediately everything was alright in this man's universe. They wasted no time in bringing their brand of fuzz-drenched, boogie van-driven rock to the Vancouver faithful. Opening up with "Pigeon Toe" from 99's *Eatin Dust* album, it was fucking on from there. High octave, pedal-to-the-metal rock n roll, delivered the way it should be. Fast, fun and furious, these stoner rock legends just get better with time. They seriously have aged like fine wine, as heard on their latest offering *Clone Of The Universe*. And especially their 2014 masterpiece *Gigantoid*, right up there with their best albums, in my opinion.

Guitarist/singer Scott Hill, bassist Brad Davis, guitarist Bob Balch and drummer Scott Reeder have now been a unit since 2002, and it shows, they are playing better than ever. A well-oiled, beast of a machine they are. They

played at least one song from pretty much all their best albums. Standouts from *Daredevil*, *In Search Of, The Action Is Go*, *Eatin Dust*, *King Of The Road* and *California Crossing*. They also played three songs from their new album, as well, the best of the night being the 18-minute epic "Il Mostro Atomico." I was blown away they played that one, I didn't expect them to play such a long song, that is almost entirely an instrumental. But fuckin hell, did it sound great live, crowd ate it up.

Highlights for me were "Hell On Wheels," "Regal Begal," "Evil Eye," "King Of The Road," "Mongoose," "Saturn 3," and the already mentioned "Il Mostro Atomico." My only gripe is they didn't play anything from the critically underrated *Start The Machine* album or *Gigantoid*. But I can't complain, they came up with a stellar setlist and played mostly everything I wanted to hear. Got to give props to the soundguy too, excellent sound throughout the show, top notch. Another super fun show to end the long weekend. I cannot wait to see the Mighty Manchu rip it up again. They are still a force to be reckoned with live, believe that!

-Jason Maher

**Korpiklaani**  
**Arkona**  
**Rickshaw Theatre, Vancouver, BC**  
**Nov 12, 2018**

For years, Vancouver was a hot spot for all the folk metal bands that would tour North America, but after being overlooked by many tours this year we were finally given one. But not just any folk metal concert, we were lucky to have two of the giants in their genre; Arkona and Korpiklaani both in one night! Like most of their tours, Korpiklaani did not have any local openers. Even though this night only had two bands on the bill, the audience was not disappointed. Each band played over an hour and showed incredible throughout their lengthy sets.

Arkona (Russia) really pulled out all the punches for this tour. They upgraded their stage gear with new props; the microphone looking more like a skull laden altar, and the band-mates were sporting new costumes. Their lead singer (Masha "Scream" Arkhipova) coming out onto the stage drenched in smoke, looking like a wood witch about to cast a spell and belting out her classic vocal sound giving the scene its full effect. Many of their songs were from their latest album, *Khram* which definitely sounded like classic Arkona, though it definitely has a more black metal feel to it which differs from their previous albums. One thing I did notice was that their bagpipe player was difficult to hear at times especially when changing to other wind instruments. One would think with only two bands and a touring sound technician that this would have been corrected, but I can only speculate what the actual issue was. It is always a challenge to work with folk instruments with a metal band, but despite that it was a very enjoyable set with incredible energy.

Kopiklaani (Finland) played a two-hour powerhouse of a set and for a band that has been touring for as long as they have, I was truly impressed. They were also promoting a new album, *Kulkija*, which in my opinion sounds more pop than their previous albums. They seem to have gotten away from their drinking song roots and traveled into a different blend of folk metal. However their set was like a journey where they start off heavy, with twists and turns of softer moments very much so like their early days before they changed their name. Then they would hit you hard with a catchy dance tune to get the crowd moving around again. It was a typical show for them in terms of getting the audience to dance and shout along to their favourite hits, this they are masters at accomplishing. Unlike the mix for Arkona, Korpiklaani's folk instruments shone through. With the accordion and fiddle players dancing around the stage, it seemed their goal was to hype up the audience as much as possible. However, their technical prowess on their respective instruments is unmistakable. The instrumentals of the night were the highlights for me, as it allowed the audience to get a really good look into how talented they are. From beginning to the end it was a fantastic show and a real treat to the fans of folk metal in the lower mainland. I just hope we don't have to wait too long for these two heavy hitters of folk metal to come back again!

-Morgan Zentner



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## Absolute Film Reviews

### The Suspense is Lost with Suspiria

#### \*Spoiler Alert\*

If only the remake of *Suspiria* had a somnambulist theme added to the narrative, then I would have found myself enjoying this movie. I am familiar with the original work by Dario Argento well enough to know that making comparisons is a very dangerous game. To recall anything from the original ruins the second; all the suspense is gone and I was anxiously waiting more for how Susie Bannion (sweetly played by Dakota Johnson), the protagonist, is going to survive—if she does at all.

This revisionist work by writer David Kajganich and director Luca Guadagnino tries very hard to condense key points from Argento's trilogy into one product. The end result is a very long and dragging film. The extra subplots can easily be axed. The fact the screenplay divides the movie into five parts is the first failing. Traditionally, cinematic narratives are fashioned into three to stay simple.

As the back history about the Three Mothers (key to the films) gets revealed, the present problems, occurring during the German Autumn of 1977 becomes just as important. The world is under consideration than the microcosm of the school to which Bannion, a new student to the Markos Dance Academy in West Berlin, is now part of. She is getting along with fellow classmates, but her instructors have something else in mind.

They are attempting to discipline Susie in her dreams so she can be the new vassal. I was hoping another German film would provide influence to this work and her vision is veiled in delirium. The source material can only provide so much, and I wished there were signs of a beloved *Cabinet of Caligari* (1920) in this film. This classic helped define a new wave of horror (German Expressionism) to later influence Universal's monsters, emerging out of America. Because this lead character is suffering from nightmares, I hoped making her a sleepwalker (who can beautifully dance) can be just as effective.

As Goblin's soundtrack was key to making the original a masterpiece, the only saving grace to this new work is seeing Tilda Swinton take on three roles and the nicely edited wild dance that the school performs, Volk. Swinton played the dean of the academy, Madame Blanc, inquiring psychiatrist Dr. Josef Klemperer and the mysterious matriarch Helena Markos to great effect. I found myself attracted to Klemperer's narrative since it was easier to follow. His perspective gives the work a sense of mystery as he discovers the horror said to be buried within the school. Had his detective work been furthered as the key point of view, this movie might have stood out



instead of copying the original.

This remake at least offers one change. When Bannion said she has come home, and will be the new protector, I was reminded of *The Haunting* (1999), a cinematic adaptation of Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*. Whether more films will be made depends on Amazon Studios' willingness to help realize Guadagnino's vision within a reasonable amount of time than in what Argento did—his work took thirty years to bring his trilogy to an end.

-Ed Sum

### Bohemian Rhapsody

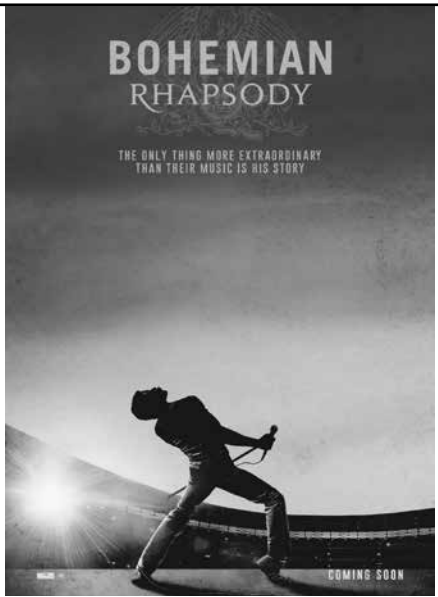
I went and saw *Bohemian Rhapsody* last night with some friends at The Odeon. Is this the real life, is this just fantasy? Caught in a landslide, no escape from reality.

All I can say is, for two hours and fourteen minutes, I completely escaped from reality. I loved this film, it was

everything I was hoping it would be and more. I was absolutely blown away, especially by Rami Malek's brilliant performance as Freddie Mercury. If he doesn't get an Oscar nomination, I will be totally shocked. Rami completely encapsulated everything that was great about the iconic singer. It was like his body/spirit got taken over and he became Freddie on that screen. So much so, that at times I thought I was watching the real deal, resurrected in magnificent, cinematic glory once again to entertain. And entertain it did, with that incredible operatic voice taking center stage. Taking the audience to heights of pure bliss, with Queen's majestic music always at the forefront. I have never seen a music biopic where the music was so prominently featured. It made you feel like everything was right in the world, even for just a brief moment. At least this film was that magical for me personally. Much like Val Kilmer did playing Jim Morrison, Jamie Fox as Ray Charles or Joaquin Phoenix as Johnny Cash, Rami put on the performance of a lifetime. He had the look, walk, talk, everything down. Something he should be very proud of for the rest of his life. A crowning achievement fit for a king, or Queen in this case.

The rest of the guys playing Brian May, Roger Taylor and John Deacon were all solid, too. I was especially impressed with all the detail in the film. From the sets, to the costumes, the recordings, and the different evolving looks throughout the band members career. And the concert scenes were exceptionally well done. Everything they got down to a T, thanks to Queen archivist Greg Brooks. The acting was great, the cinematography was top notch. There of course was the drama, but also humour that was very effective. But all in all, it was the music that was the true star that shined. The use of real live Queen studio music and outtakes was extremely rewarding for fans, not to mention the real live Queen musical recordings that were used, mixed with Freddie's real voice and also that of Freddie Tribute impersonator Marc Martel's voice was very effective. All the live scenes were incredible, it felt like you were really at a Queen concert at times. The recreation of Wembley Stadium and the legendary Live Aid show in 1985 was probably the biggest winner of the night. It was mind blowing how close they recaptured that glorious moment in time.

*Bohemian Rhapsody* opened as the biggest winner of the weekend box office numbers. With 50 million in the US and Canada alone, a very impressive feat. This film is the second highest grossing music biopic of all time, during its opening weekend. Right behind *Straight Outta Compton* which took in 60 million during its opening in 2015. *Bohemian* also took in an additional 91.7 million overseas for an impressive 141.7 million in total. Not a bad haul, for a movie that cost a reported budget of 52 million to make. And if you have read some bad critic reviews and yes, there are some out there, fuck these critics, this movie was pretty much everything a true Queen



fan could ask for. Were there a few historical inaccuracies in the film for dramatic purposes? Sure there were. Could they have delved more into the creative process that led to these musical masterpieces being recorded, yes. Could they have shown more of Freddie's last dark and dying days, sure they could have, but that would have been extremely depressing and completely unnecessary. Could they have focused more attention on Freddie's sexuality and debauchery, again yes they could have. But then the film would have been R-rated, and not reached as wide of an audience. And they also wanted to protect Freddie and his incredible legacy. Those were all smart decisions and very understandable in my opinion. They touched up on all of those aspects. They just didn't drown the film in all of that.

If you want more of the sexuality, excess, drama, last days, etc, then there are plenty of documentaries and books to choose from to satisfy you. The filmmakers had a 15-year career they had to cover in just 134 minutes. And I think they did an incredible job in capturing the magic that was Freddie Mercury and Queen in that time frame. I highly recommend this film to everyone who is a Queen fan or not. It was a thoroughly entertaining film and I sure as hell got rocked! Cannot wait to see this movie again, next time at the Silvercity IMAX theater for sure.

-Jason Maher



# Absolute Album Reviews

## Ambassador - Belly Of The Whale Independent

Ambassador come from the bayou, but they sound like a frozen tundra in some vacant quadrant of the arctic circle. Opening track "Empress" has a dreamy post-hardcore feel that hides a burning intensity under thick oblique guitar chords and copious amounts of echo-drenched arpeggios.



Moodiness on high, each track takes its time to unfurl revealing all kinds of buried gems beneath the layers of shoegaze-aesthetics. The vocals are very consistent and palatable to a pop-rock crowd that expects big choruses and mindless party lyrics. But the concise and clearly sung words

serve to add a deeper intrigue and create an ambience that is definitely super contemplative. Singing, "Feral just a stray among them" on "Feral As They Were," as crashing cymbals graze pummeling guitar riffs, the liquid rage calls to mind the territory of groups like A Perfect Circle. "Return Castaway" is a throbbing ballad with Cure-inseminated guitar leads and dramatic cinematic turns that beg for repeated listens.

-Dan Potter

## Backwoods Payback - Future Slum Independent

If you like your honey with a bit of mud mixed in, then this grungy set of tunes will make your breakfast even more worth getting up for. "Pirate Smile" has an early QOTSA feel with a hillbilly Zeke influence punching through like a barn fight turned bloody. The songs are hard but keep a sweet haziness going for easy digestion. Dripping with peer-to-peer wisdom, "Lines" rips up the fuzz and blasting drums equation the way it's supposed to be done; with total uncombed, long-haired abandon. "It Ain't Right" is subdued Seattle grunge at its most



sludgy, as the chord progression buzzes anxiously under the wailing vocal tirades. Things take a creepy ambient-doom turn on "Cinderella" as dizzying low-tuned guitars lurk in a mist of altered states not unlike My Bloody Valentine's opus-level output.

A lot takes place over the ten tracks showing this band has a lot of tricks up their flannel sleeve.

-Dan Potter

## Bast - Nanoängström Black Bow Records

This three piece blackened doom band marks its return with a seething album overflowing with thunderous fuzz riffs and ominous roars of psychic oblivion. "Far Horizons" is an album unto itself, what with its relentless churning guitars and endless blast beats with their controls set



for the center of the sun. "The Beckoning Void" rips a path straight through to the next galaxy. Its pitiless and harmonically complex opening guitar riff is perfect for plowing the wrinkly crevices of the brain and getting the mind ready to journey to planet doom. This cosmic insanity continues on many of the ten-plus minute tracks, all of which bring the heaviness cranked to eleven.

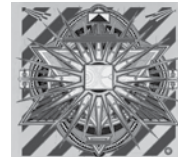
On "The Ghosts That Haunt The Space Between The Stars," wicked black metal related carnage is graphed onto

expansive stoner rock not unlike Sleep at their most epic. This record is an excellent follow up to their amazing debut and is a must have for any doomed stoner out there.

-Dan Potter

## Cortez - No More Conqueror WOOAAARGH

Uncalled for vitriol is the most fun form of vitriol, and when you hit play on this new release from these heavy math rockers you'll get just that. "Seven Past Forever" is a cold iron fist to the sedated masses and medicine for the heavy music lover. This Swiss three-piece blazes through track after track of high speed dissonant and poly-rhythmic insanity capturing the intensity of such acts as



Dillinger Escape Plan and Botch. The drum kit gets battered to pieces as each micro accent is pummeled into existence. Snare drums pop and hiss between the religiously down stroked guitar playing, creating a panzer division of shrieking hardcore dissonance in the

brutal process. "Duende" provides enough gruff vocals for ten rallies in protest to metal bands that turned pop. Blood, sweat and tears are what you're going to get from start to finish with this band.

With modern rhythms these guys rip up the groovy riff playbook and entice their victims with sheer brutality.

-Dan Potter

## Kosm - Cosmonaut Independent

This new Vancouver band brings forth a thinking man's kind of metal that still secretes evil at every turn. "Space Mead" blasts you in the face with riffs of fury with melodies that capture that creepy obliqueness by which Cynic is best remembered for bringing to metal. Some



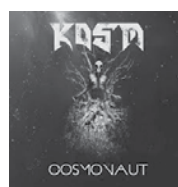
groove metal starts off "Wolves Upon the Throne" before spiraling into Dream Theater territory. And as if the lock step guitar playing with precise drumming weren't enough to tie your mind in knots, some amphibian demon rises above the Tool complexity and wretches out

promises from the deep. She-Ra hopeful and vocalist Jessie Grace sings up a storm on "Omnipresence" ripping out some Amy Lee tonsil tricks and bellowing like an enraged cave troll until you bow down and obey these metal lords. The singing is strong throughout the album, bringing the songs to life beyond the dense fog of sinister death metal instrumentalism. This is a strong debut effort filled with excellent gems and headbanging depth.

-Dan Potter

## Saber Tiger - Obscure Diversity Sliptrick Records

Japan's Saber Tiger sling the power metal like a sledge



hammer packing in the bluesy swagger of Dio rather than the dragon slayer aesthetic of Blind Guardian. The Blackmore indebted guitar solos on "The Worst Enemy" are played with perfection and guts. This track has a wicked hook and it is sold in totality by its gravelly voiced

lead singer who really brings some snake dancing

wails to a crescendo in dramatic ways.

Think heavy power metal, bicep busting metal on the Symphony X-rivalling track "Stain" which cranks out staccato riffs that should carry a warning for highly combustible materials. More tapping guitar solos further the leather agenda of total banzai rock and if you think you have the skills you could wail along to the vocal chord bending chorus melody that is as memorable as it is technically proficient. "Beat of the War Drums" spares no expense with the riffs being launched relentlessly as if war has been declared on the iron planet of Mercury. Look out, 'cause they bring the pageantry as well as the Cthulhu-like simplicity of total sonic destruction.

-Dan Potter

## The Great Sabatini - Goodbye Audio No List Records

Most tracks are short and sludgy, made complete with the murk of Neurosis and Melvins wafting up from the deep tar pit of fuzzy doom. Songs like "Dog Years" play like some kind of fatal warning blared out with shifting doom laced chords that jerk across the guitar fret board like poisonous spiders.



The screaming is unrelenting on "Strip Mall or, the Pursuit of Crapiness Parts 1-4" and the inebriated intro gives way to a speedy lock-step punk break. Their collective sound is verging on noise rock, as the clear intention is to rile up folks with a whipping of sonic mayhem. And it works by the time the last and longest of

the tracks come on, a song titled "Hand of Unmaking." This fourteen-minute closer sounds like how the movie *A Clockwork Orange* looks.

-Dan Potter

## Trollwar - Oath of the Storm Independent

If Tolkien and Lovecraft had met, I bet you they would have formed the first symphonic black metal band. Bands like Wintersun or Amon Amarth are clearly avid readers of epic fantasy tales as are this Quebec based



group. The band's folkish but sledgehammer-heavy delivery of metal brings to life icy tales of battles which can be seen as both real examples of internal struggle or entire works of dark fiction.

Imagination is the weapon of most value in the world of epic metal. "The Forsaken

One" brims with pagan-esque arpeggio guitars that scream up a storm of witch like doom. I hear a lot of Ritchie Blackmore and his Blackmore's Night but super-charged up several notches and instead of the Renaissance being paid tribute, it's the planet Xoth.

The production is strong and crisp, which is a necessary for this type of dense and muscular genre. All the l's are doted and T's crossed especially on "Winters Night," which starts off with a beautiful dual guitar intro and only gets better as it progresses through the cold and black.

-Dan Potter

## Unearth - Extinction(s) Century Media



Being a huge fan of old school thrash and hardcore, Unearth has always kept me interested over the years, not only for their lack of 3 or more syllables in their band name, and when you look at them they don't look like they just raided Hot Topic, something that seems to be a given for

most bands in the 'metalcore' genre.

Their latest release, Extinction(s) is possibly their most polished to date, and still includes the heavy riffs, intricate solo fills, slamming beats and growling lyrics that truly bridge the gap between hardcore and metal.

With the tragic loss of Dimebag many years ago and his brother, Vinnie Paul earlier this year, we know we will never hear Pantera again, but Unearth have taken the torch for the 'metalcore' enthusiasts and they won't disappoint you as they continue to build their own legacy.

-Chadsolute

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# Hocico

Interview by AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?**

Erk Aicrag: It's Erk. I am most infamous for being the screamer of the Mexican band Hocico.

**AU: Give us a brief history of Hocico... Who are you, how did you form, and what does the name mean?**

EA: We make hard and dancy music with harsh vocals.

**AU: You're heading out on a West Coast tour this month, with a couple Canadian dates starting in Vancouver – will this be your first time visiting Canada?**

EA: No, we have played Canada many times before, places like Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto. But this time we will play Vancouver and Calgary for

EA: Hocico is Erk Aicrag and Racco Agroyam, two angry survivors from the violent streets of Mexico City. We are cousins and we always dreamt of having our own band since we were kids. In Mexico, the word "Hocico" (muzzle) carries also an aggressive connotation; in some expressions it is a term of offense, which is why, when we were thinking about a name for our group that would express our rage and aggression, Hocico seemed to bring it all together.

**AU: Can you describe your music for those of us who've never heard you?**

the first time.

**AU: Are there any cities on the tour that you're particularly looking forward to playing?**

EA: Yeah, we are specially looking forward to playing those shows in Canada as it will be the first time for us visiting Vancouver and Calgary. We are excited about the shows in Denver, Portland and L.A. too as it is always big fun being there.

**AU: What does life on the road look like with Hocico? Do you have an essential tour survival kit?**

EA: Apart from drinking tequila and eating spicy food all day long, we do nothing special.

**AU: Are you expecting North American audiences to be very different from your fanbase in Mexico? How would you say your lives in Mexico have shaped your brand of music?**

EA: We don't expect our North American audiences to be that different from the Mexican ones, in our past visits they have been very energetic and crazy too! And definitely growing up in Mexico City totally shaped our music, although I have been living in Germany for the past 13 years. The essence of Mexico City is still in our bones. Hocico would be totally different if we had lived somewhere else. The acts of violence and injustice we used to witness daily have brought out the anger inside our songs.

**AU: What can you tell us about the Mexican**

**heavy music scene? We love the speed metal we've been hearing from your area!**

EA: Yeah, that's great! Extreme music has always touched many people in Mexico and it's great to hear so many good bands coming out from our homeland.

**AU: What does the next year have in store for you as a band? Anything exciting on the horizon that you can tell us about?**

EA: We are working on a new album that is scheduled for release in 2019, and we are mixing a new live album that we recorded on our last visit to Tel Aviv, it might still get released this year.

**AU: Is this band a full time occupation, or do you guys have day jobs at home?**

EA: Yes it is, for the most part Hocico is our full time occupation. We are very lucky for not being in the need to get a day job for the last 25 years. We have other music projects too, I have my band called Rabia Sorda and Racso has another band called Dulce Liquido, and additionally we both spend time producing/working with other projects/bands in the studio, too.

**AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?**

EA: There are many things you still don't know about us... and probably it is better to keep it that way.

**AU: Any final words for our readers?**

EA: See you soon at one of our shows in North America!

[www.hocico.com](http://www.hocico.com)

PHOTO SOURCE: [hocico.com](http://hocico.com)

## subculture

By wendythirteen

The word NO.

One of the greatest achievements in my life was losing the fear of saying that word and meaning it. To finally having the wherewithal to shed my conditioning and to stick to it. I have fought for that all my life. I think back to how many times when I was younger that inside my brain I was screaming 'no' but still put up with shit until it reached the point of enough. Of course now that I've survived this long and conquered that, I find the relief filled, great sigh of power I feel when using 'no' and having it respected is amazing.

While the word 'no' is empowering to the person saying it, it's the reaction of the person you're saying it to that makes all the difference. It seems people have forgotten how to accept the word 'no' when it is being said to them. When someone is informing you of their boundaries you need to respect and heed that warning. It seems that first world entitlement is interfering in this simple situation.

The days of prodding until the answer is "yes" need to disappear. Lines are being drawn in the sand. The #metoo movement has created a monstrous wave of awareness that seems to be blurring the fluidly changeable lines between acceptable flirtation and persistent persuasion. There is something to be said about the phrase 'I don't need to tell you twice.' If someone is clearly not interested in you these days, just stop. Move on. I strongly believe there is someone for everyone. Which brings us to another cliché 'you can't always get what you want.' Others have their own power of choice. Relinquish that need to control them. Control only yourself.

Humans are inherently sexualized creatures. Nature has instilled in every being the need to 'procreate' whether you associate that feeling to your sexuality or not. The problem with our societies consent issues starts with power being taken away from our children to say 'no.' If they grow up being forced to providing obligatory affection to creepy, leering uncle Festus, then you have them morphing into confused adults.

This is also where the #metoo movement is now a slippery slope. Almost every human is imperfect



and have all been guilty of ridiculous interactions of a sexual nature with others. During the two decades of working in a booze soaked environment while intoxicated I've felt women's breasts, kissed them, smacked a guy's butt, raked my nails down their chests, etc. You get my drift. I lived through some wild times in the 80s, 90s, Y2K and beyond. Now that the #metoo movement is a

huge awareness issue, this is a wakeup call to rein in our behaviours.

Unwanted groping these days is absurd. Keep your fucking hands to yourselves. Repeat offenders need to be called out. As a disservice to the whole #metoo movement is the discrediting of this important stance with embellished overreactions. What I find really disturbing is the "post first, get the other side of the story down the road." As the recipient of cease and desist letters in the past, I find myself carefully weighing the evidence these days when I see the wanted poster-style trials by Facebook. If I know both parties, I find myself reaching out to the targeted person to get clarification.

I posted recently about someone claiming assault about another. After some digging I found out that she had attacked him and he had pushed her hard off him. Twice. Then he left her residence and went home. Of course alcohol was involved, as was a Facebook wanted poster outing him as abusive but curiously left out her initial, also abusive actions that caused his reaction. I've lived that scenario in my past. I've been violent with my partners. I see it in my head.

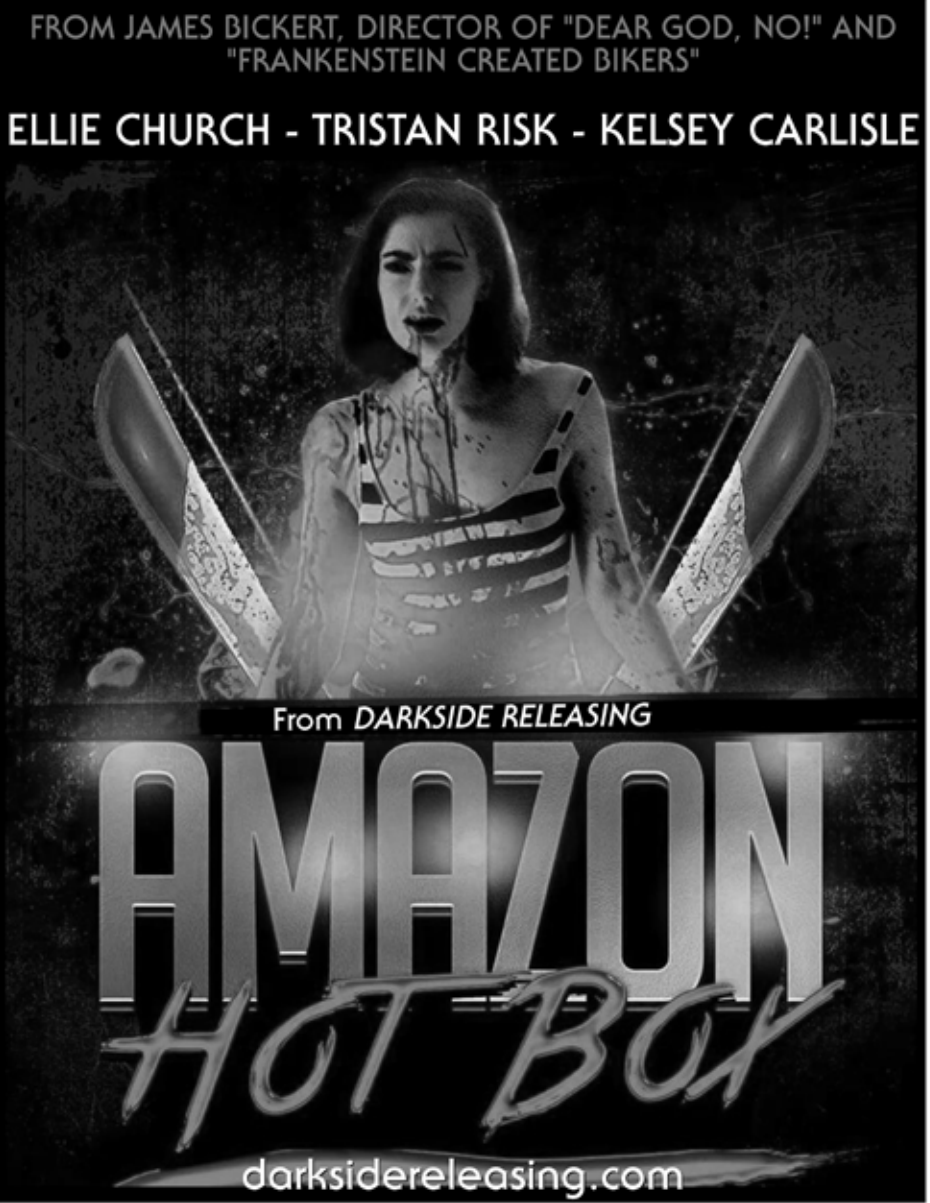
Now I realize it seems like I'm siding with the guy here, but in my post I insisted that it is time for women to be accountable for their participation in these scenarios. We can't have it both ways. Personal responsibility is a must if society is going to succeed in having an equal standards, fairness footing for men and women. How do we expect to be taken seriously if we're denying our own toxicity? We need to stop being martyred victims and to strengthen our empowerment beyond reproach.

Yes, this means you, me, everyone.

My sincere apologies to anyone that felt uncomfortable because of my actions in the past. I am embracing my life lessons as quickly as possible. I am accepting responsibility for any and all of my shitty behaviour. I'm an evolving woman.

Handshakes still unnecessary, thanks. I just say no. That is a firm NO. Love to you all. XOXO

## ABSOLUTE SUBCULTURE







# ARTIST PROFILE

girlfriend Caitlin Legault and I started. We have put on two art shows to date featuring over 50 artists from the lower mainland and we fundraise for different charities at each event.

Art Church is a platform for a wide range of artists, crafters, and creative freaks. Our emphasis is on alternative and lowbrow. It's an opportunity to network, inspire and build a sense of community.

**AU: Upcoming projects/artshows?**

HP: Art Church in May.

**AU: Anything else you want us to know?**

HP: I shared an elevator with Jeff Goldblum and he held me and purred made up songs about me in my ear.

**AU: Any final words for aspiring artists?**

HP: Everyone CAN draw, they just don't!

**AU: Where can people see/buy your art?**

Instagram @the\_human\_prism, @artchurch604 / Facebook, the Human Prism, Art Church

## The Human Prism

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are some of your many talents?**

My name is Rianne Keel and I hide behind art moniker The Human Prism. I called myself this because I make rainbows. I like to paint and draw and sew when I'm not doing hair or window painting or prepping for art shows. Up until recently my energy was spent nurturing my burlesque hobby but I've hung up my pasties to allow time for an art career.

**AU: How long have you been an artist?**

HP: I have never not drawn. I took art any chance I could in high school but that's it for formal education. I have some artists in my family, but I never spent time drawing with them as I was more into anime and violent themes and boobs, always boobs. Nothing got me started, there's just never been any other way. I imagine I was just Bob Dole-in' it as a fetus.

**AU: Describe the art you create.**

HP: Sexy. Colourful. Graphic. Saturated. Unapologetic. Cheeky. Childlike. Joyful. Satanic.

**AU: What are some of your influences?**

HP: Mad Magazine, Archies, Cool World, Sailor Moon, heavy metal,



**AU: How has your art evolved?**

HP: It has just grown up with me. The older I get the less I give a fuck, so I find I'm just drawing and painting whatever I want and if Ducktale orgies or crying girls with ballgags is what I want to do, then that's what I'll do, regardless if the followers I gained for my unicorns and rainbows like it or not.

**AU: Most outrageous piece of art you've done?**

HP: They're really just getting worse/better. Lots of veiny insertion happening right now. All the fucking cartoons and the executioner piece.

**AU: Does your art lean towards the side of naughty or nice?**

HP: Both. I like cute animals and sparkles and dreamy spacescapes and western motif. I also love BDSM and latex and death.

**AU: Tell us about the cover image you created for this issue's cover of Absolute Underground?**

HP: I got super stoned and did up a cute little unsuspecting elf butt about to get a big ol chomp from the bud monster!

**AU: What are your aspirations as an artist?**

HP: Still figuring that out. More expos, an online store



hook ups girls, Don Bluth movies, old Disney, specifically Fantasia, Frazetta, Mucha ... My favourite current artists are @crgstudios and @junkyardla, @officialtroybrooks, @colororgy, @oliverhibert, @bonethrower.

**AU: What**

**mediums do you work in?**

HP: I paint canvas with acrylics, I use a lot of glitter. I mostly use an iPad so I can work as fast as my brain does. I have always wanted to make dolls. And reenact the pottery scene from Ghost.



instead of just Instagram, maybe a comic!

**AU: Do you take commissions?**

HP: Yes I do.

**AU: What are your obsessions?**

HP: Art. Weed. Music. Nature. I'm also a big movie buff, a fan of animated shows, vintage kitsch, and I have a wicked T-shirt collection.

**AU: Is there such thing as too much glitter?**

HP: Apparently yes, glitter and straws are out! How will us wacky art aliens get high any more?

**AU: Tell us about Art Church.**

HP: Art Church is a blossoming artist collective my



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## Midnight

Interview by AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with and what are you most infamous for?**

Athenar: I'm talking to nobody. I'm typing some bullshit on a laptop computer. I'm probably most infamous for taking some of my personal doo-doo and placing it in the ice cream freezer at a convenient store. That was years ago though.

**AU: What's happening in the Midnight camp right now? Are you guys on the road or back home in Ohio?**

A: I'm home in Ohio, best place on earth! We're gonna be doing some gigs out and about very soon though. A new LP should be out early next year then do some Euro fests.

**AU: You've spent almost the whole spring and summer touring, with one of our local favourites, Wormwitch! How have the shows been? Any good stories from the road for us?**

A: Yeah we did I think eight gigs with them and Bat. Solid dudes, after using their Orange bass amp on those gigs, I came home and bought one myself. First piece of gear that I've owned in a long time that was manufactured after 1988!

**AU: What is Midnight's essential tour survival kit?**

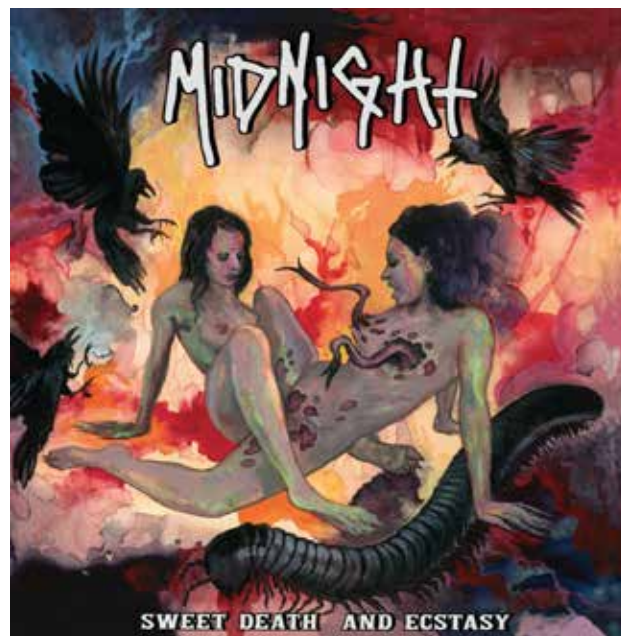
A: I'm a pretty simple motherfucker, so not much is needed for me except my bullets and mask. Some good food does help as well.

**AU: How are you guys surviving under those masks in this insane heatwave? We can't imagine how hot it must get in there!**

A: Some like it hot! I don't mind it at all, it makes me feel like I'm accomplishing something, workin' ya know, doin' it! If you're not sweating on stage, you're probably boring the crowd to tears.

**AU: Do you have a specific reason for just having the one official website platform? Most bands these days are all over every platform of social media?**

A: If it was up to me, I would have none. A good friend of mine started the facebook page as a fanpage. Another good friend of mine just started an Instagram



page, which I have no idea what that is. It's casual.

**AU: What is your philosophy as a band when it comes to writing and performing music? Why do you do what you do?**

A: To do whatever is boiling to get out of your system into the souls of others to be corrupted. Either that, or as my parents told me to do as a youth, go play in traffic.

**AU: When will you play Canada next? What have your past Canadian experiences been like?**

A: We can never play Canada soon enough. I've always had fantastic experiences in the great white north. It's the second best place in the world behind Cleveland.

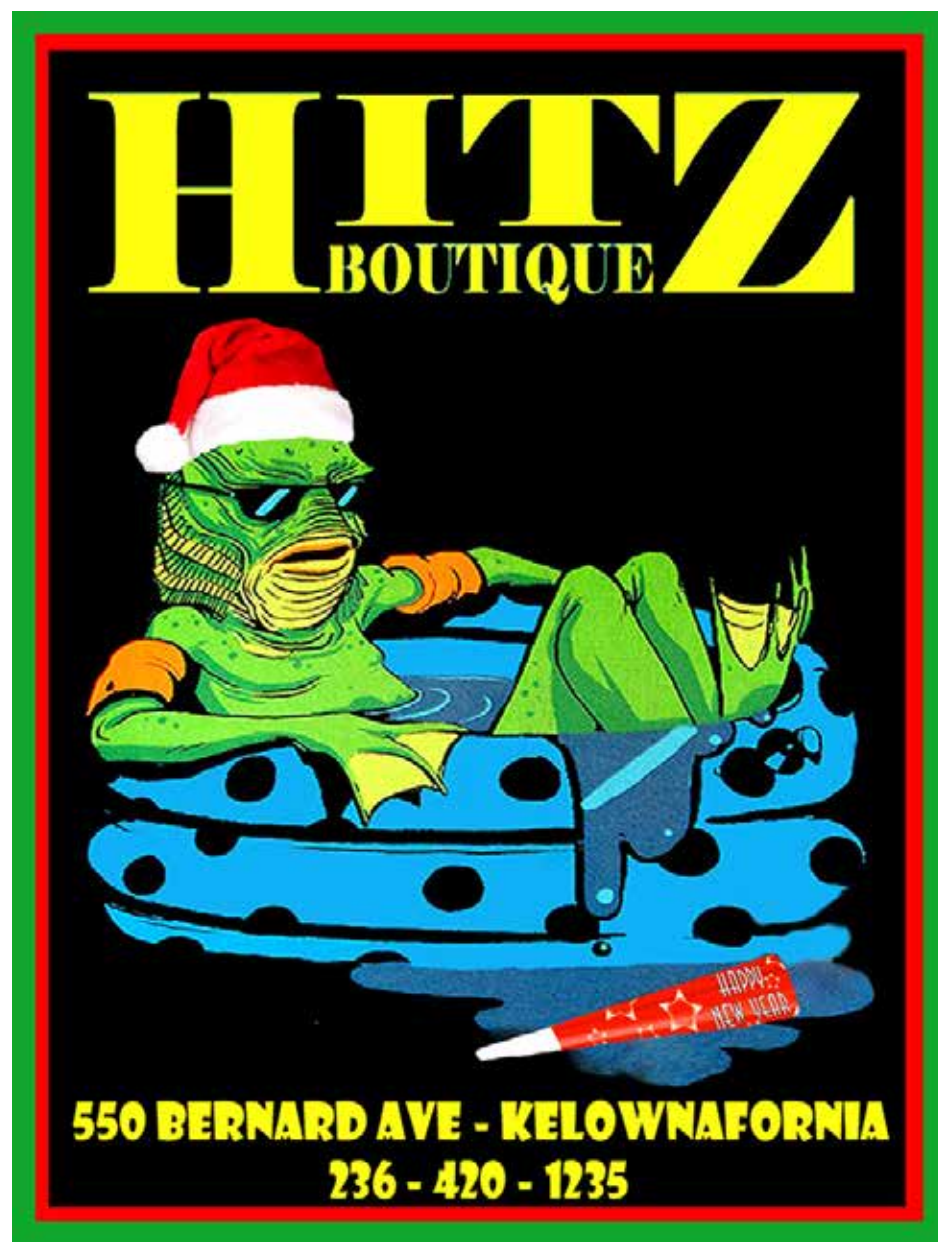
**AU: What else should we know about Midnight that we don't already?**

A: You should know that even though I may seem like a total prick, I'm actually a very nice fellow... kinda.

**AU: Any final words for our readers?**

A: Thanks a lot for giving any shits about this band! Bang like fuck!

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Midnight-87909491643>





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## Alexis Macrea

Interview by Malcolm Hassin

**Absolute Underground: Who are we speaking to today?**

AM: Alexis Macrea.

**AU: Where did you grow up?**

AM: I kinda bounced around in the lower mainland in general. I moved to Revelstoke in my early teens when I started skateboarding, then to Nelson and back here to Vancouver.

**AU: Where do your main skate roots stem from?**

AM: I was a bonser local from the age of 14 'til I was about 17, dropped out of high school and lived right behind there for a year or two.

**AU: In the past year I have seen you progress so much, has any thing changed?**

AM: Yeah, lots has changed. Life's crazy, I got out of a relationship, I've just been living single. Moved into a rad house with a bunch of artistic, creative roommates and just been living, doing my thing, waking up and doing what I want to do. It's kinda selfish but it's been working for me.

**AU: You have been invited to some comps do you wanna tell me how that happened?**

AM: Shit, I went ams getting paid in Montreal, that was a trip. It kinda came last minute, I couldn't even afford to do the trip, so I reached out to some friends. The trip was half funded by friends in the skate community, I paid for half of my trip and the skate homies hooked it up, and I went last minute, it was fun.

**AU: Didn't you win a contest here in town?**

AM: I won some Zumiez contest, they do this North American tour, and they have a collaboration with Exposure, which is an annual all-women contest, the largest attended female contest in the world. so they have this collaboration, and the deal was the top three women will get scored and compete with the men, cause it's the best of four, was a mens contest and pick the top three, and send them to Exposure.

**AU: Where was that?**

AM: Half the trip was in LA, they took us to the Barracks, got the whole place to ourselves, three girls and two filmers, got pedicures and shit, first pedicure ever, it was bittersweet cause I am so ticklish. Then we went to San Diego, it was surreal, cool to skate among that caliber of talent and women.

**AU: You spend much time in the States?**

# SHRED SESSION

AM: No, I am not very well-travelled. I went to the same contest two years ago. And the same Zumiez trip, I won the same trip twice, every single need was taken care of, and I had zero American dollars.

**AU: What's the skate scene like down there? Different than here?**

AM: It's so different, there are so many different sides to it, everything was so designed for skating, the parks are so perfect. I definitely realized how grateful I am to live here! We have clean air, and clean water, I was getting nose bleeds in the hotel from the smog. But it was beautiful to have nice weather during the dawn of our torrential downfall of rainy winter.

**AU: What about the scene here?**

AM: There's a community, and I guess my opinion's biased, I've spent a lot of time here. I have been back here for almost ten years. I like the rougher terrain, I grew up skating Revelstoke, which was just garbage, and we would have to make do.

**AU: Where have you been skating lately?**

AM: You'll always find me at the plaza late nights, that's kinda my jam. It's only a limited time we're going to have it. And of course here (SBC) in the rainy seasons, I love transition... I love skating street and transition, that's kinda my cup of tea, SBC Plaza. I get around, I am down for new spots and new parks.

**AU: Do you have any advice for kids growing up, or women getting into skating, but may find it a bit intimidating to start?**

AM: Yeah man, it isn't about how good you are, or how old you are, it's about whether or not you're challenging yourself and learning and growing, it's all relative.

**AU: Do you find yourself growing mentally as well as progressing with your tricks?**

AM: I don't even know man, mental health is such a complicated thing. I feel grateful to have skateboarding because the world is so fucked up and complicated, it's one thing that's predictable, and it makes sense. If I commit to it, thinking in my head, and I try my hardest and focus, I can accomplish something, that's the predictability of it, and that gives me comfort other avenues in life that are really unpredictable. Skating is a really great way to focus my attention and grow confidence and self-esteem.

**AU: Any thing you're working on now?**

AM: I've been experimenting with alternative medicinal ways to help myself break tunnel vision in my mind, so like microdosing mushrooms. It just kinda breaks the [idea] of tricks being hard, I learned nose manuals when I was really young, so just the art of balancing. Recently I have started trying backside nose grinds based on that learning that in tranny is my next goal. Done it on banks and stuff, but it is a new development, I just wanna be able to nose grind like I can nose manual!

**AU: Balancing life and skateboarding, how do you do it?**

AM: I dunno man, things have been so different since I moved out on my own from this relationship. I live with a bunch of free-spirited people who live by the moment, I don't really have the most structured life, just kinda skate every day and don't really plan too much for the future.

**AU: Any advice for the kids out there?**

AM: Just try and be honest and listen to your gut, whatever you put out, you will get back type thing. Try and be a good person and life won't be so hard for ya.

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## Sloppy Seconds B.A.

Interview with vocalist B.A.  
By Ira "Knock Yer Block Off" Hunter  
Transcribed by Tara Zamalynski

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?**

BA: This is B.A. and my claim to shame is that I am the singer for Sloppy Seconds.

**AU: Take us back to the beginning of Sloppy Seconds.**

BA: We were having a drunken party at my house, my parents were out of town, when I was about 18 years old and all my friends that were still there at the end of the night, and drunk out of their minds just started picking up instruments and playing. That's probably why we are still

together. We didn't form a band, we were just friends that started playing.

**AU: What is Junk Rock?**

BA: Well to me it's pretty simple. It's a combination of punk rock and junk culture. We're all into old TV shows, and comic books, and porn, science fiction, horror movies, exploitation, all of the things that make life great. So put a beat and some hard guitars behind it and that's Junk Rock.

**AU: When porn had a story.**

BA: You know, I do miss the plots. I really do. Some of them were amazing. Taboo is the work of genius.

**AU: You just rereleased your album *Destroyed?***

BA: Yeah, that just came out on D-tour Records on vinyl, and it's a limited run so order your copies now. They only did an initial pressing of 1000. That record has kind of taken on a life of its own. We can't even claim responsibility for it any more.

**AU: It's a fucking great record.**

BA: I'm happy people feel that way. When you're 20 years old, you're just writing the first thing that came to your head, and I guess it just clicked with a lot of people. We are really lucky that people latched onto it the way they did, and we're still able to be going 30 years on.

**AU: What was the scene like where you came from, and why has it been such a long time since you played?**

BA: Indianapolis is landlocked, and not always the best place for a punk rock scene to flourish. There have been phases. The Zero Boys came along in the early 80s, then about five years later after they disbanded, we started playing. What we have decided to do to keep going, every year we decide to attack a different part of the country. This year it's the Pacific Northwest, so we are playing San Jose all the way up to Everett, Washington.

**AU: Will there be a new album?**

BA: I hope so. We probably have enough songs flying around to put it together now, we've just got to tighten them a little bit. That's something

I'd like to see happen. If not a full length, then an eight song EP or something like that.

**AU: Can you tell us about one of the new songs?**

BA: We got a song that would probably end up on our next album called "Black Xs" and I think that would probably be a good one. Just really basic Ramonesy "Cruisin' for a bruisin' black eyed susan." I think it would work. We also wrote a song about Murder Burger in Davis, California.

**AU: How is the song, "I Don't Want to be a Homosexual" going to go over tonight in San Francisco?**

BA: Well, you know I was just wondering about that myself. I saw the crowd in there and I don't think we're going to have a problem.

**AU: Was your name B.A. inspired by Mr. T?**

BA: It was, that's where we came up with it and then we just kind of started walking it back, and were like "What is B.A.?" and then we finally said bad attitude.

**AU: And you got to meet Mr. T when he did the quote for the album? "What's my prediction for people who don't like Sloppy Seconds? Pain!!!"**

BA: He was really cool. It was funny because, his agent or handler was like, "If he records this, it's not going to end up on a record or album or something?" and I was like, "Oh no, we would never do that," so he was like, "Let's do it, let's do it."

**AU: Was it just an on-the-spot thing?**

BA: Remember when he put out that comic book? He was doing an appearance at a comic book store and he saw me standing in line with

my chains. He was like "Aw, wait a minute we've got ourselves a Mr. T fan." We took a bunch of photos and everything, and I was like, could you say something about our band, and he was like, "Yeah, yeah. What do you want me to do?" So I was like, "Why don't you do your line from the movie?" and he was like, "Yeah, let's do it."

**AU: Is Traci Lords aware of the song you have about her?**

BA: Oh, Traci? Yeah she knows about it. I feel like she feels it's beneath her dignity to comment on it but she definitely is aware. Somebody actually got her to sign one of our Traci t-shirts, which

shocked me. It's obviously an illegal photo. I think she started doing porn when she was 14. Right after she turned 18 was when people started sniffing around, so she jetted off to Paris and recorded one legal video that she owned all the rights to and then spilled her guts that her video was the only one that people could legally buy.

**AU: What can people expect from the live show?**

BA: We always try to hit on all of the major hits. I hope everyone walks away hearing at least one of their favourite songs tonight. That's one thing about writing songs the way we do, we have a pretty good idea of what the audience expects. There might be a few curve balls here and there, but for the most part it should be a pretty classic Sloppy Seconds set.

**AU: Words of wisdom...**

BA: Murder is the triumph of the stronger will, drink, fight, fuck and kill.

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## Sloppy Seconds



## Ace Hardwhere

Interview with guitarist Ace Hardwhere  
by Ira "Why Don't Lesbians Love Me?" Hunter  
Transcribed by Tara Zamalynski

**Absolute Underground: Who are we chatting with?**

Ace: I am Ace Hardwhere, guitarist of Sloppy Seconds.

**AU: You are like the Angus Young of punk rock.**

Ace: I appreciate that. He's a big influence for me actually.

**AU: How do you spin your guitar around like that?**

Ace: It's just a mechanism. It's the same company as ZZ Top actually, I just kinda keep it to myself about where I get it from. It became kind of my trademark after a little while.

**AU: So tell us about the show tonight?**

Ace: It was fun. We only do a few weeks when we go out, so it's just kind of a sprint. Everything is fast. Get off the plane, we do fly dates now, and it's just non-stop.

**AU: Thursday you played San Jose, and then you took a little break and then you came here to San Francisco?**

Ace: We have a show every night. There's no nights off, that's why it's like a mad dash. We make it all the way up to Seattle and Everett.

**AU: Boil down Sloppy Seconds for Canadians living in igloos.**

Ace: You can tell by our music what our influences are. You noticed the Angus Young influence.

**AU: Sex Pistols, Ramones...**

Ace: A little Blondie, I was into Blondie growing up. Chuck Berry was a big influence for me when I was real little.

**AU: You're real good at the duck walk.**

Ace: He's one of my major influences. I have many, but those were the early ones.

**AU: So what was happening in Indianapolis back then? B.A. was saying he's a distant cousin of Paul Z from the Zero Boys and you guys were the second wave of Indianapolis punk?**

Ace: It came to that yeah, you don't plan things like that but once we got onto certain labels we just kept going and pushing it. It's the nasty of it all, you just keep it at. Because at the start of it all, it's nothing. You create something out of nothing and you just keep with it.

**AU: Can you give us a sneak peak of any new songs?**

Ace: Sloppy has got a lot of songs that we haven't put out yet. The reason it takes Sloppy so long to put out a new album is we are very particular as a band [regarding] what actually gets put out. There is a lot of stuff, not necessarily throw away,

but it's set aside and put on a shelf, and there is a bunch of stuff like that. Sometimes it's easier to go back when you can't figure it out entirely and it comes to you right away. You shouldn't have to fight it, it should just be easy.

**AU: You guys played "I Don't Want to be a Homosexual" tonight. Did you have any apprehensions about playing that song in San Francisco?**

Ace: No, because if you listen to the lyrics it's not a bashing. It's more promotional. It's not what people first think it is. That's more of B.A. question, the depth of the lyrics. I just play Chuck Berry leads.

**AU: Do they call him B.A. because he wears all of that gold around his neck? He told me how much he loves Mr. T tonight. I love Mr. T too.**

Ace: Well yeah. Yes indeed. He's even got video with Mr. T.

**AU: Final words for Canadian fans?**

Ace: Keep an eye out for us, because we're still out there. We'll get there. It's taken us awhile to get comfortable with flying out because we're using other peoples gear and it makes a difference when you're trying to represent yourself.

**AU: Just remember to bring your own guitar spinner!**

Ace: Exactly! What do I do without it?

## Sloppy Seconds Steve Sloppy

Interview with drummer Steve Sloppy  
By Ira "The Horror of Party Beach" Hunter  
Transcribed by Tara Zamalynski

**Absolute Underground: What do you know about San Francisco Punk Rock?**

Steve Sloppy: I know that I like it.

**AU: Who are we talking to?**

SS: I'm Steve Sloppy, and I am guilty of pretending to know how to play the drums in Sloppy Seconds for the last 87 years.

**AU: How come in 87 years you've only played San Francisco once? Is it because you didn't want to be a homosexual?**

SS: Oh, I don't care about homosexuals one way or the other. Whatever makes you happy, go for it.

**AU: This is a great tour and thank you for doing it. Why did it take so long to do it?**

SS: Timing. We are just not very prolific, and lazy. We try and get out and play when we can, and hopefully we will come back more often. It certainly won't be another 25 years, I'm hoping to come back within the next couple of years.

**AU: What did people miss tonight? Explain this live show that we just saw at Bottom of the Hill in SF?**

SS: Four midwestern guys on stage making fools of themselves trying to play instruments.



**AU: There was no lag time. You guys played song after song. It was tight.**

SS: Well, the faster we get through the set the sooner we can start drinking.

**AU: What is Sloppy Seconds all about if you boiled it down?**

SS: Sloppy Seconds is about eternal immaturity. We call what we do

Junk Rock because we sing songs about junk culture. Things that are important to us: comic books, beer, girls. A lot of the same shit that people sing about, but we try and put it into not your everyday kind of day situation. We sing about comic books, monsters, things that matter to us. We get it, that's great. If anyone else wants to come along and enjoy it, that's great - as long as we entertain ourselves that's what we gotta do.

**AU: Was Russ Meyers aware of your song about him?**

SS: Yeah, he was aware of it. I spoke to him about doing a video for Meyer Girl, he said he really liked the track. I had spoken to Haji and Kitten Natividad, and several of the Meyer girls. They loved the song, and were very much into doing it and appearing in a video for us and dancing around. Russ said he would love to do it, and he

respected it, but he wanted \$100,000 to do it so there is no fucking way that was going to happen.

**AU: You're wearing a Suspiria shirt. Do you like the band Goblin?**

SS: Yeah, Goblin. They are great, they did *Dawn of the Dead*, they worked with Dario Argento, George Romero. Really atmospheric stuff, really haunting.

**AU: Tell us about the song "Come Back Traci."**

SS: B.A. just always thought Traci Lords was really hot and he had a crush on her forever. He just had a boner for her, so he wrote an ode to Traci, a love song to Traci Lords.

**AU: I'm realizing now, he was the name B.A. and he's obsessed with Mr. T.**

SS: He's not obsessed with Mr T, it was just B.A. for bad attitude. He's similar to Mr. T in many ways. Mr. T is a black muscular gentleman with a mohawk who played a mercenary. So there were so many things B.A. had in common with Mr. T that we just thought it was appropriate.

**AU: B.A. has the medallions, the gold around his neck.**

SS: Yeah, it's his bling. His homage.

**AU: Onstage, what was your bass player saying about his prostate?**

SS: That's just one of his things, he likes to brag about it. He does have a six inch taint, and he's got some fame around that.

**AU: New album coming out any time soon?**

SS: We've got a bunch of stuff laying around, if we can get off our lazy asses and get in the studio we



might put something together. The working title for it would be #Aslopalyptica. Hopefully it will happen in the next year or ten, we'd love to do another album.

**AU: Final words for Canadian fans?**

SS: We'd love to come up there. You guys have great beer, and great health care. It's going to be great. If we are up there and we get hurt when we're drunk, everything will be cool.

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## EAST BAY PUNK



late 80s and we were hardcore punk band.

**AU:** Linda XYZ, what's her story?

JC: She's always been punk rock, and to the books of what it was like in the 70s. Just like The Mutants, what we did in the 70s and 80s, and then everything changed.

**AU:** The music had a message then, and seems she's still bringing it today.

JC: Yeah, she's still bringing it today. She's still got something to say. She has a message, "You can buy me a drink, you can take me home, but if I didn't say it's okay, it's still called rape." Spoken word, she speaks up for women. Women rule the world, they don't need to be disrespected.

## East Bay Punk Crucifix

Interview with guitarist Jimmy Crucifix

By Ira Hunter

Transcribed by Tara Zamalynski

**Absolute Underground:** That's punk rock! He's eating a brownie that fell under the stage.

Jimmy Crucifix: It's still good

**AU:** One bite brownie, he's taking two.

JC: The toenail makes it taste really good.

**AU:** Who are we talking to and what are you most famous for?

JC: Most famous for running the most comprehensive rehearsal studio, Lennon Studios, in San Francisco. I was a guitar player in a band called Crucifix.

**AU:** Take us through the history of Crucifix...

JC: I started out in a punk rock band called The Next in 1979. We did our first gig with the Dead Kennedys, Crime, and Pearl Harbour and The Explosions, that was 40 years ago this October. And then I joined Crucifix in the '80s.

**AU:** Tell us about the show tonight.

JC: Tonight is like the earlier punk rock thing, like pre-80s, pre Crucifix stuff. When I went into Crucifix it was different times. In the 70s I was in a punk rock band with a guy called Brittley Black called The Next. It was the 70s, it was a different punk rock.

**AU:** Describe the headlining band tonight, The Mutants, to someone who has never heard of them.

JC: The Mutants were new wave. The B52s before you ever heard the B52s. If it weren't for The Mutants there would be no B52s. They were the start of it. It's the same thing with my band The Next, we were a part of a thing that came out in the 70s and then there was a different punk rock in the 80s, that was the hardcore and then it became punk rock. That song that I was playing with Dick and Jane tonight, which is a song called "I Hate Hardcore," that's when we did that fast stuff (guitar noises) "I hate hardcore, I hate hardcore!" that was kind of like slapping myself in the face because I was in a punk rock band Crucifix in the



**AU:** The San Francisco punk scene, sum it up for Canadian fans that have no idea. We live in igloos up there.

JC: I know you guys don't live in igloos. I've been to Ucluelet, I've been to Victoria. I love Victoria, I fuckin' love Canada. I love love love love it. I've been to Vancouver.



**AU:** Was it like a super group you guys had when you performed with Dick and Jane tonight?

JC: This is just a bunch of people having a good time.

**AU:** Tell us about each of the members of the band.


JC: Dave Dalton from The Screaming Bloody Mary's, Greg Langston from No Alternative, and then me of course, from Crucifix, Linda XYZ for Alienation.

[www.crucifixonline.com](http://www.crucifixonline.com)

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## The Pathogens Jesse Luscious

Interview with vocalist Jesse Luscious  
By Ira Hunter  
Transcribed by Tara Zamalynski

### Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?

Jesse Luscious: I am Jesse Luscious. We are at The San Francisco Eagle in beautiful San Francisco, California. I was in Blatz, The Gr'ups, The Criminals, and The Frisk, and now I am in The Pathogens. I used to get naked in Blatz, I used to scar myself in The Gr'ups, and I just jump around like a jumping bean in all the other bands.

**AU: This seems like the kind of bar where they would encourage you to get naked.**

JL: Oh absolutely! The Eagle has a long history

of being a very out there leather bar/bear bar. Every Thursday they open up their doors to punk rock and rock of all shapes and sizes.

**AU: Tell us about the show tonight.**

JL: We played with the Lolly Gagers, and He Who Cannot Be Named. We were jumping around and pouring drinks on people, and having a great time with our friends.

**AU: Who else is in this band? I hear it's a supergroup of Bay area people.**

JL: Cinder was in Tilt, and Retching Red. Sebastian was in Undead Boys. Markley was in

JL: We're catchy! As in, The Pathogens.

**AU: Any songs of note?**

JL: "Culture War," which is basically about culture war in different parts of society, but also it plays off the idea of pathogens and disease sectors.

**AU: You have a song called "Make America Hate Again."**

JL: I wrote that the day after Trump won the election, I was like, "Really? God this fucking country is fucking stupid."

**AU: Is there a difference**



**between the East Bay and San Francisco scenes?**

JL: Absolutely. East Bay is like Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond, El Sobrante, Albany, El Cerrito. As it came into prominence with 924 Gilman, which is in Berkeley, it really was much more like the kids were in charge, but over here in San Francisco it and older scene, from what I gather. I came out here in 1989, so I missed the beginning of the Gilman scene. It was a much more violent scene over here in SF at places like the Farm, they used to have huge shows, like all these crazy punk bands and skinheads

would come and beat each other up. Gilman started as an alternative to that with Maximum RocknRoll, and Tim Yohannan. It came out of a more innocent place. It was lots of kids learning how to play, and then all of the sudden they became Crimpshrine, and Operation Ivy, and all of those other bands. It was kind of like the ABC No Rio of the West Coast. Gilman is still there, and it has new crop of bands.

**AU: There is also a whole metal scene that cropped up.**

JL: Yeah, from downtown El Cerrito, fuckin' Metallica, Testament, Exodus - fucking East Bay. Over here in San Francisco there is, no pun intended, and exodus of artists and musicians from San Francisco because it's so fucking expensive.

**AU: Final words for Canadian fans?**

JL: Hopefully we will be up there at some point, but until then, be really happy you have healthcare and a sane fucking government.



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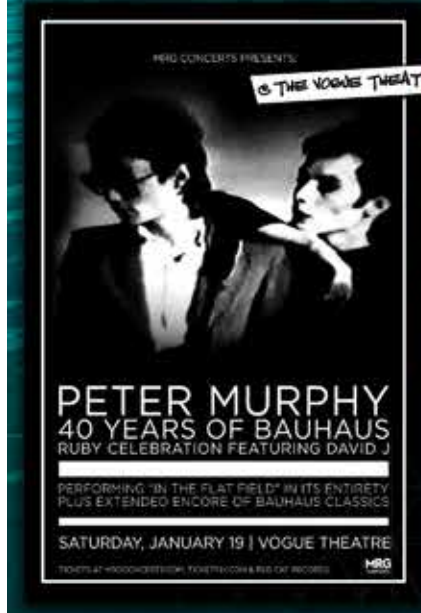
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<b>2 HOOTENANNY</b> - OPEN MIC - 4PM - 8PM / FREE	<b>3 WATCH FOR OUR ROTATING BEER TAP SPECIALS</b>	<b>4 BLACK SHEEP COMEDY</b> OPEN MIC - 8PM <b>KARAOKE</b> 9PM - BOTH FREE	<b>5</b>  FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM @LOGANSPUBVICTORIA	<b>6 BLOOM</b> <b>90s ROCK</b> NIGHT 8PM / \$5	<b>7 MASSIVE SCAR ERA</b> <b>OPHELIA FALLING</b> <b>MALEVOLENTS</b> <b>WINTERS REACH</b> 8PM / \$10	<b>8 INTERZONE PRESENTS</b> <b>1970s</b> <b>DANCE PARTY</b> 8PM / \$5
<b>9 4PM - 8PM</b> <b>HOOTENANNY</b> 8PM - MIDNIGHT = <b>1st FAN KLUB</b> <b>RECORD NIGHT</b>	<b>10</b>  FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK.COM/ LOGANSPUBVICTORIA	<b>11 BLACK SHEEP COMEDY</b> OPEN MIC - 8PM <b>KARAOKE</b> 9PM - BOTH FREE	<b>WE TRIPLE DOG DARE</b>  YOU TO COME PARTY AT LOGANS PUB	<b>13 CAVITY PRESENTS</b> <b>HYPNAGOGUE (USA)</b> <b>MOT</b> <b>VORT AHN</b> <b>TELURK</b> 9PM / \$5	<b>14 STILL FOOLS</b> <b>CRIMSON WITCH</b> <b>ELECTRIC DRUIDS</b> 9PM / \$10	<b>15 ANGRY SNOWMANS</b> 9PM / \$15
<b>16 NO COVER SUNDAYS</b> <b>HOOTENANNY</b> OPEN MIC - 4PM <b>FAN KLUB</b> - 8PM <b>RECORD PARTY</b>	<b>17 Sorry We're CLOSED</b> <b>PRIVATE FUNCTION</b>	<b>18 BLACK SHEEP COMEDY</b> OPEN MIC - 8PM <b>KARAOKE</b> 9PM - BOTH FREE	<b>19 HAPPY HOUR</b> MONDAY TO FRIDAY 3PM TO 5PM	<b>20 KLUBVADER PRESENTS</b> <b>FACTORY</b> TECHNO / EBM DANCE NIGHT 9PM / \$5	<b>21 CRASHING INTO THINGS</b> <b>ISLAND MONSTER</b> <b>BLOODY WILMA</b> 9PM / \$10	<b>22 RAINSHADOW AL's</b> <b>18th ANNUAL</b> <b>MUSTARD SEED</b> <b>FOOD BANK BENEFIT</b> ADMISSION BY DONATION AND/OR NON PERISHABLE FOOD ITEM - 9PM
<b>23 HOOTENANNY</b> OPEN MIC - 4PM <b>FAN KLUB</b> - 8PM <b>RECORD PARTY</b>	<b>24</b>  <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	<b>26</b>  <b>BOXING DAY</b>	<b>27 CAROLYN MARK'S</b> <b>HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS</b> 9PM	<b>28 TAKE WARNING PRESENTS</b> <b>THRASHLORD</b> <b>IRONSTRIKE</b> 9PM / \$10	<b>29 TAKE WARNING PRESENTS</b> <b>CHEAPSKATE HOLIDAY DROP-IN!</b> <b>AWKWARD AC</b> <b>LAST OF THE V8 INTERCEPTORS</b> 9PM / \$10	
<b>30 HOOTENANNY</b> OPEN MIC - 4PM <b>FAN KLUB</b> - 8PM <b>RECORD PARTY</b>	<b>31 INTERZONE PRESENTS</b> <b>1980s</b> <b>NEW YEARS EVE</b> <b>DANCE PARTY</b> 9PM - 2AM / \$10					



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## The Pathogens Cinder Block

By Ira Hunter  
Transcribed by Tara Zamalynski

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most famous for?**

Cinder Block: Cinder Block here. I'm not famous, although, my band Tilt got to play with some famous people in the 90s.

**AU: Where did you grow up and what was the music scene like?**

CB: I'm a corn-fed gal from Nebraska. When I was a teen we could only choose between arena rock or bar bands. Later I got to see bands like REM, The Replacements, Husker Du, Blast, Red Hot Chili Peppers and X.

**AU: Can you take us through your musical career?**

CB: The first band that made it out of the garage was called The Spam Grenades in 1983. We moved to the SF Bay Area in 1985 but broke up after playing a handful of gigs.

**AU: What do you know about the early San Francisco / East Bay punk scene?**

CB: I chose the Bay Area because I had been inspired by bands like The Dead Kennedys and The Avengers but when I showed up the Def Club was gone and The Mab and Rock On Broadway were only hosting hair metal bands. Metallica and Slayer, while great bands, had seemingly lain waste to the '77 style punk scene. But things seemed to be bubbling in the East Bay. The Spam Grenades had played with Kwik Way at Pony Express Pizza in Redwood City and they were so great I became intrigued with Oakland and the East Bay.

**AU: Who influenced your unique vocal style?**

CB: One of the reasons I felt that the Bay Area would be accommodating of my music is because of bands like The Avengers and The Mutants. Bands with strong female members who had something to say and would not be denied a place on the stage. As far as my vocal style influences - back home when I first started to sing I could only get my hands on Janis Joplin and Grace Slick. I later glommed onto Patti Smith, The Sex Pistols and The Ramones. Punk let my brattiness shine through in my vocal style. I see Linda XYZ around at shows all the time, she rocks! The Pathogens are playing her wildfire victim benefit this January 26th at Benders in SF.

**AU: Is there a difference between the SF sound and the East Bay sound?**

CB: That's a hard question to answer because music is so connected yet also micro-styled by individual players, right? It's also a matter of time period - in the late 80s, SF was steeped in speed metal, but the pop punk scene was budding in the East Bay. Those two movements could not have been more divergent from one another. In the metal scene, the women held their boyfriends' jackets at the back of the club while the boys did that longhair "mad cake walk" circle dance in the pit. In the burgeoning pop punk and riot grrrl scene, women were front and centre. So it's no accident that I ended up in the Gilman scene.

**AU: How important was the all-ages venue 924 Gilman Street? Any memorable shows there?**

CB: Too many to even count. Gilman was by no means just pop punk. It was, and still is, a breeding ground for artists searching for their style. It's a place where artists (especially young artists) can find their voices and gain confidence. It is also a grassroots community experiment where the members own and operate the club. There's benefits, swap meets, potlucks, garage sales and even 12 Step meetings. How many punk venues are still operating after 30 years in the same location? Not damn many. That's because the power is decentralized and the vision steady at Gilman. Bars with a single owner/booker tend to wither out of boredom, mismanagement and greed over time while a place like Gilman is designed to thrive.

**AU: How did you originally get signed to Fat Wreck Chords with your band Tilt?**

CB: Fat Mike had wanted to sign Tilt from the beginning but Lookout seemed the more logical choice at the time. We came to our senses after Lookout got mad at us for shopping our demo. I still love Lookout! Records' back catalog and I appreciate what they were doing, but Fat Wreck Chords turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to Tilt.

**AU: What can you tell us about the recent documentary Turn It Around: The Story of East Bay Punk?**

CB: Corbett Redford is an amazing storyteller and filmmaker! And his band Bobby Joe Ebola and the Children McNuggets are an incredible band. *Turn It Around* is a masterpiece - mainly because I'm in it. Seriously, it is an epic telling of the East Bay punk scene as told by the people who were there.

**AU: Tell us about your new band, The Pathogens.**

## EAST BAY PUNK

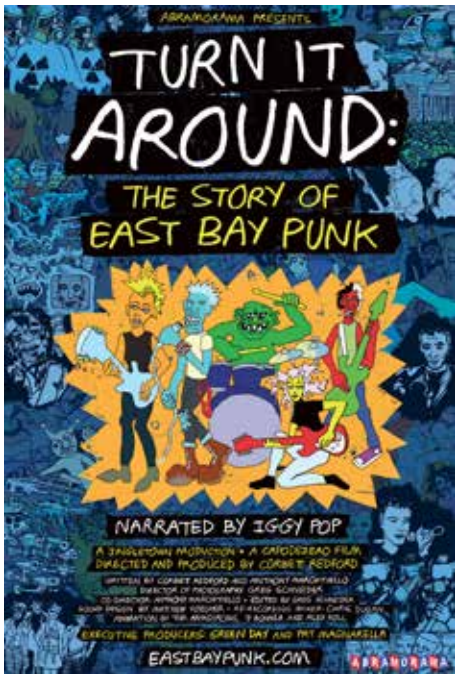


CB: The Pathogens are my favourite band ever! We have members from the original Gilman scene who have been honing their craft for decades and we have members who are straight up bad ass punk musicians through and through. This recipe makes for some top of the line, authentic hard-hitting punk rock with a political slant. Yes, we're biased - we hate fascists! Despite our age, or maybe because of our collective experience, our live shows are insanely energetic. I usually anchor myself to a mid-band blasting point so I can belt it out while being bolstered by flanking guitars. Jesse launches himself into the audience where, god knows what he might do! When the mood strikes me I will occasionally get in someone's face with my words but Jesse is out there lassoing people, rolling on the floor, climbing rafters. It is definitely a spectacle worth seeing and hearing.

**AU: Final words for Canadians fans?**

CB: Hey Canada, can we have your healthcare system and gun violence statistics?  
[www.facebook.com/thepathogens](http://www.facebook.com/thepathogens)  
[thepathogens1.bandcamp.com](http://thepathogens1.bandcamp.com)





## Turn It Around: The Story of East Bay Punk

Interview with director Corbett Redford

By Ira Hunter

**Absolute Underground:** Tell us about the documentary you made.

Corbett Redford: *Turn It Around: The Story of East Bay Punk* explores Northern California's pivotal role in evolution of punk rock - the loud, intense and anti-authoritarian philosophy of music and politics that arose in the late 1970s. Early San Francisco Bay Area punk pioneers like Dead Kennedys, Avengers, and Flipper as well as the *Maximum Rocknroll* fanzine helped take the punk underground global.

As the once-vibrant local scene became wrought with violence, corruption and racism, punks over the bridge in the East Bay responded by creating a fun and inclusive style of punk that also carried on the region's tradition of radical thought. Banding together around Berkeley's all-volunteer 924 Gilman Club, this diverse collective of misfits created a do-it-yourself, no-spectators' petri dish for art & music that changed the Bay Area punk scene... and the world at large.

**AU:** What inspired you to start the project originally?

CR: Green Day had the idea to do a documentary about this subject for many years - they wanted to pay tribute to their scene, their creative peers and the local culture that means so much to them. I have been a part of the local East Bay



scene for decades - things lined up and the time was right. They chose me to direct it as I knew a lot of the people involved in the scene and had a reputation for being able to complete crazy projects.

**AU:** How long did it take from start to finish?

CR: Four and a half years.

**AU:** What bands are featured?

CR: It features interviews with past and current members of 924 Gilman, Maximumrocknroll, Lookout Records, Green Day, Rancid, Neurosis, Operation Ivy, Crimpshrine, Yeastie Girlz, Stikky, Samiam, Jawbreaker, Isocracy, Kamala and the Karnivores, Beatnigs, NOFX, Primus, Metallica, Bikini Kill, Bad Religion, Soup, Sweet Baby, Special Forces, Deadly Reign, Christ On Parade, Corrupted Morals, Mr. T Experience, Victims Family, The Lookouts, Monsula, Cringer, Spitboy, Blatz, Filth, Econochrist, Fifteen, Pinhead Gunpowder,

Nuisance, Screeching Weasel, Engage, Dicks, Subhumans, The Tubes, Boo Hss Pfft, Verbal Abuse, The Vagrants, Schlong, The Gr'ups, The Tourettes, Pinhead Gunpowder, Tribe 8, Kwik Way, Social Unrest, The Tourettes, White Trash Debutantes, Outpunk, DMR, Psychotic Pineapple, Black Fork, Sawhorse, The Skinflutes, The List, Sacrilege BC, No Dogs, Gag Order, Guns N' Roses and more.

**AU:** What years does it cover?

CR: A little of the 60s, then basically 1977 to 1994.

**AU:** You must have been stoked to get Iggy Pop as the narrator for the film. How did that come about?

CR: At a certain point we decided we needed a narrator to help move the story along and condense themes. I suggested Tom Waits, as he lives in the North Bay and has a great voice. Billie mentioned Iggy. Green Day had recorded some songs on the album *Skull Ring* with Iggy, so Billie contacted Iggy and the next thing I knew I was on a plane to Miami to record narration with him.

Iggy was very kind and helpful and had great ideas on how the narration should go. He told me stories of a run-in he had with Bill Graham, his memories of *Search and Destroy* fanzine and invited us into his backyard to check it out while he meditated in the sun. Pretty amazing experience that I will never forget.

**AU:** What was so unique about the East Bay Punk Scene?

CR: It was a very young scene with a few very helpful elders helping with logistics like signing leases and running record labels. It was less about how you sounded or how you dressed and more about participation, support and making art for art's sake.

**AU:** Is the San Francisco scene included or is that a whole different movie?

CR: Both. We include the SF scene at the beginning of our film as SF was where punk was birthed in the Bay Area and was always the "big brother" to the fledgling East Bay scene. I hope that Joe Rees and others in SF make the definitive SF documentary soon. SF had a monumental and unique punk scene in the 70s and 80s and I would be excited to see it honored with a feature-length documentary.

**AU:** Who else was interviewed to bring the story together? Any big names lend their voice?

CR: Yes - members of Green Day, Metallica, Guns N' Roses (Duff was in punks bands such as The Fartz), Primus, Rancid and many others "big names" are involved. But we made a purposeful point to include diverse voices and to include promoters, organizers, activists, graphic artists, authors, actors, and non-punk musicians as well.

**AU:** What can you tell us about the venue the Mabuhay Gardens?

CR: The Fab Mab was where punk was born in the Bay Area. Dirk Dirksen was the godfather of SF Punk. If not for The Mab, there would have been no place for punk to flourish. Bill Graham hated punk culture and music, so The Mab was very important for punk artists.

**AU:** What were some of the most important album releases that propelled the scene?

CR: Operation Ivy's *Energy* was likely the most important East Bay album to be released as it relates to the culture we focus on in our film.

**AU:** What are the main cities of the East Bay scene featured in movie?

CR: Oakland, Berkeley, Albany, El Sobrante, Pinole, and Rodeo.

**AU:** Could there be a whole other documentary about the East Bay metal scene?

CR: Yes, there could be a whole documentary about the crossover movement. And I think one is in production from the folks who put out the *Murder In The Front Row* photo book.

**AU:** Did crossover start in East Bay?

CR: Crossover did start in the East Bay when



If not for Wes' support and thinking outside of the genre box, the movement would have not likely taken hold.

**AU:** How crucial was Lookout Records?

CR: Very crucial to the Gilman scene. If you were making music and volunteering in the Gilman scene, you wound up on Lookout. Early Lookout was very representative of the early Gilman scene.

**AU:** Tell us the concept behind the all-ages venue 926 Gilman street. It seems like a punk rock utopia.

CR: All ages, no-alcohol, no drugs, no fighting, no racism, no sexism, no homophobia. That's it. Follow the rules or get the hell out.

**AU:** Who are some of your favourite East Bay bands from back in the day?

CR: Isocracy, Crimpshrine, Operation Ivy, Green Day, MTX, Spitboy, Rancid and more.

**AU:** What's the state of the current musical landscape in the East Bay?

CR: There are still great bands happening in the East Bay - just go to Gilman any Friday, Saturday or Sunday on any month and you can see bands like Sarchasm, Public Safety, Destroy Boys, and more. Punk is always growing and changing. It is still alive as long as there are new voices to inject new energy into it.

**AU:** Are you aware of the older bands like The Mutants, or Linda XYZ from

**Dick and Jane?**

CR: Yes, those bands are great. We feature The Mutants some in the film when we cover the early SF scene, but then we go over the bridge to the East Bay as our film is about that.

**AU:** Why were the Dwarves not in the movie?

CR: The Dwarves were initially a Chicago band who moved to SF. Our film focuses some on the early SF punk scene, then moves over to the East Bay and does not return to SF again for the

## EAST BAY PUNK

sake of our narrative subject (East Bay punk). The Dwarves moved to SF years after the birth of The Mab and the early SF punk scene - hopefully they would have a part in any SF documentary that was made.

**AU:** There is a story about girl gangs in the movie. What was/is Vagina Core?

CR: Yes, DMR or Durant Mob Rules was an East Bay girl gang who beat up skinheads and others.



"Vagina Core" was the term that the Gilman all-girl rap group Yeastie Girlz called their kind of music.

**AU:** Green Day helped produce the movie - How important were they and did they stay true to their roots after "Breaking Punk" and shooting to super stardom?

CR: They were an important band in the early Gilman scene and have maintained consistent support of the local East Bay punk scene throughout their success.

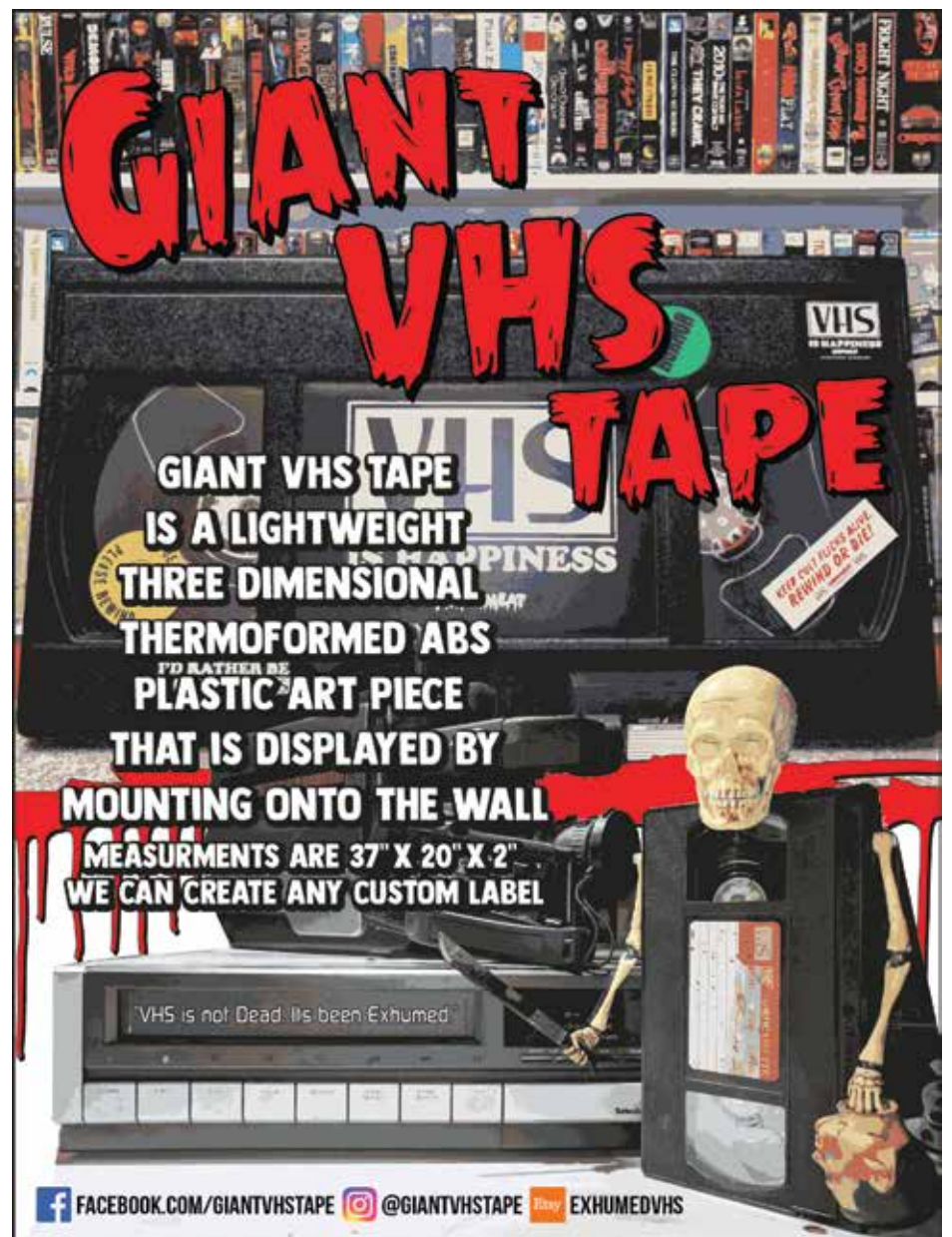
**AU:** How do people find the movie?

CR: They can get the DVD/Blu-ray and vinyl soundtrack from 1-2-3-4 Go! Records at 1234gorecords.com/turnitaround

They can also rent or buy the film on iTunes at apple.co/TurnItAround

1234gorecords.com/turnitaround

PHOTO CREDIT: Murray Bowles







## Dick And Jane

Interview with lyricist and vocalist Linda XYZ

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?**

Linda XYZ: Linda XYZ

**AU: And it's your birthday. Happy birthday!**

Linda: Thank you. Actually I'm just a frisky 68 tonight. Tomorrow I will be in my dotage at 69.

**AU: 69 is the best age to be.**

Linda: We'll see.

**AU: You were amazing. Punk rock that really says something. Explain the band and where you came from for people in Canada that have no idea.**

Linda: My first band was Alienation. We played starting in '77 rehearsing and getting our songs together. Our first show was in 1979. Our lead singer was Naomi Russe Eisenberg of Dan Hick and the Hot Lips, she played electric violin. Hot young guitarist, was probably only 18, we never even thought about it. My husband on bass, he should rot in hell. I'm Linda XYZ I played drum machine in Alienation. We broke up in '81, Dick and Jane formed in 1988. Me on drum machine and two electric guitars. We went til '91, took 25 years off, restarted August 2013 and we haven't stopped yet. Jimmy Crucifix even performed with us tonight.

**AU: Does the San Francisco punk scene have**

**any influence from the hippy movement?**

Linda: In the beginning of punk rock Paul Canter from Jefferson Airplane would show up at shows.

**AU: It seems like when you perform you have**

**a message. You had an anti-rape song and you're still trying to make this music mean something.**

Linda: Punk rock gave me a forum. I thank Dirk Dirksen and Ness Aquino, and Kelso who started Sound of Music. Dirk and Ness Aquino, the Mabuhay Gardens, that's where I found my people.

**AU: What year was this?**

Linda: '76-'77, punk rock started here. We were so happy for something different. It wasn't Eddie Money, it wasn't Jefferson Airplane.

**AU: Who are some of your favourite SF punk bands?**

Linda: John Binkov of VKTMS, my long term favourite San Francisco punk band. '77 through '78 and on to the present. Bob Clic of The Lewd. Rubber City Rebels. VS with Olga De Volga, rest in peace. Psychos in Love. The Hellflowers.

**AU: Final words for Canadian fans who want to know more about San Francisco punk?**

Linda: I started in punk rock over 40 years ago. I moved to San Francisco in 1975, so I was here at the beginning and it has been the joy of my life. I discovered I've always been a punk, I just didn't know what the hell it was until I found my voice in San Francisco, the home of free speech, the home of spontaneous art, the home of punk rock music. Fuck you, L.A.!

[www.facebook.com/DickandJane4ever](http://www.facebook.com/DickandJane4ever)

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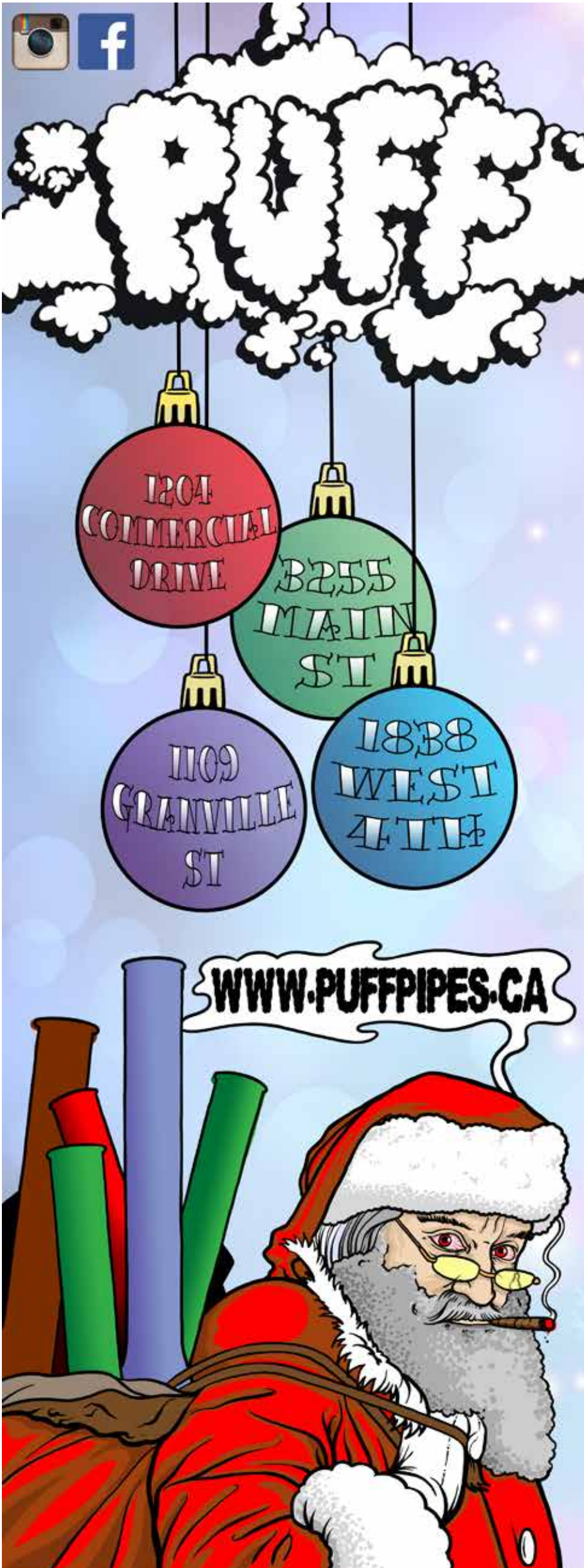
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## SF PUNK

# He Who Cannot Be Named

Interview by AU Editorial

**Absolute Underground: Who are you and what are you most infamous for?**

HWCBN: My name is He Who Cannot Be Named. I guess I am mostly known for playing in the Dwarves. Generally people know me as the guitar player who always wears a mask and not much more.

**AU: What do you know about the early San Francisco / East Bay punk scene?**

HWCBN: I wasn't in the bay area at that time. I lived north of Chicago in the early 80s. The first wave punk scene was mostly dead by the time we got to San Francisco. The North Beach area of town where Mabuhay Gardens and On Broadway were located had "pay to play" hair metal clubs then, which the punks avoided. It seemed like the bands that were big locally at the time were trying to model themselves after Guns N Roses.

**AU: And what do you know about what was happening before?**

HWCBN: I guess it was pretty wild. People talked about what it used to be like. We weren't even a punk band then, we were a psychedelic band.

**AU: Did the SF hippie vibe influence your early psychedelic years?**

HWCBN: Yes, we listened to lots of hippie music in the early days, but it tended to be the dirtier, nastier stuff... bands like The Seeds and Thirteenth Floor Elevators. Dirty hippies, scummy hippies. Not the nice peace hippies.

**AU: How long have you been living and performing in the Bay Area?**

HWCBN: The Dwarves moved to San Francisco from Chicago in 1986. The entire band moved and lived in a house together for a few years. I have been in the Bay ever since.

**AU: How did the Dwarves originally get started?**

HWCBN: The band started when Blag and Saltpeter met in high school and started a band. I joined a few years later as the keyboard player. The band was called Suburban Nightmare back then.

**AU: Tell us some of the craziest stuff that's ever happened to you when on stage or on tour.**

HWCBN: Well, I played hundreds of shows completely naked except for the mask, so I guess that could be considered to be pretty crazy.

**AU: How did you come up with your unique costume, or lackthereof...?**

HWCBN: I never planned any of this stuff. The mask started because the first show I played with the band was at a Halloween party. I realized that I liked hiding behind the mask and just kept it going. Nudity started when the band played a show that was being video taped for a local cable

show in New Jersey. In order to make the show more interesting the band members all decided to appear naked. We did, and I liked it so I kept that going.

**AU: What makes the San Francisco punk scene unique?**

HWCBN: I don't know if it is unique. I guess if anything it is that there is history here and you can run into people who have played in well-known bands over the years.

**AU: Is there a difference between the SF sound and the East Bay sound? Or is it the same thing?**

HWCBN: I don't think so. The thing that shapes a particular region's sound is the fact that people see the other musicians in the area play. They then copy things that they like. The East Bay and SF are pretty close together so people go to shows on both sides of the bay pretty regularly.

**AU: Did the Dwarves play the all-ages venue 924 Gilman Street? Any memories to share?**

HWCBN: Yes, The Dwarves were one of the first bands to play there. I don't remember anything special about it though. It is still there today and it is kind of the same all these years later. We actually were banned from playing there for a little while. I think that had something to do with our album covers.

**AU: What about the San Francisco punk scene now?**

HWCBN: There's punk bands. Bottom of the Hill is a cool venue. It's happening for sure, you just gotta go out. Gilman is still around, they still make good shows. The punk scene is still alive and well as much as it ever was. Gilman's is actually the same as it was since 1991. Run the same way, the same crowd, same attitude, everything.

**AU: It's All-Ages right?**

HWCBN: Yeah. Run by the kids, for the kids. One time we played Gilman's and this kid came up to me after the show. "We taped you guys", back when they had video tape, "We had a party at our house, and we put the tape on", our show lasted like ten minutes or less, "We put your tape on, and we played it over and over and over again. All the kids trashed my parents house."

**AU: Tell us about your solo project. How would you describe the live show? What are some of the subjects you touch on?**

HWCBN: I started the project about ten years ago, because I was writing songs that, while they sounded a bit like Dwarves material, didn't really fit in with the hard edge of the band. The songs are a little nicer I guess. I try to have nice melodies along with fucked-up subjects like hating children, eating children, murdering for entertainment, going to war for entertainment, those sorts of things. We play lots of Dwarves songs live, as well.

**AU: Who is in your solo band?**

HWCBN: Keith Mueller - lead guitar, Bobby Ramone - bass, Eric Borst - drums

**AU: What would it say on your Tinder profile?**

HWCBN: I don't know what Tinder is. I guess that means I'm old.

**AU: What's the state of the current SF punk scene?**

HWCBN: There continue to be lots of good bands in town. It is kind of hard to live in San Francisco now because the rents have gone way up. That is probably changing things a bit. Punk musicians have to be pretty rich to pay \$2000 a month rent.

**AU: What are some past or present SF/East Bay bands that people should check out?**

HWCBN: Harrington Saints, Fang, Bite, Memphis Murder Men, Re-Volts.

**AU: Any plans to come tour Canada?**

HWCBN: No plans now. I occasionally do a show up there with The Dwarves. I played in Vancouver last year. My wife and I went out to Victoria for a couple days after that. I like it there.

**AU: Final words for Canadians fans?**

HWCBN: My new album is coming out in October on a God's Candy Records out of Toronto. It is titled *The Good, The Bad, and The Brutal*. Check it out. You can find out more about my solo work at my website, [www.musiccannotbenamed.com](http://www.musiccannotbenamed.com).



# DWARVES



Photo credit Ester Segarra

## The Dwarves

Interview with top cock Blag Dahlia  
By Ira "Speed Demon" Hunter

**Absolute Underground: Who are you and why are you the greatest?**

Blag: I'm Blag the Ripper and I'm the greatest because the Dwarves are so fucking good!

**AU: What do you know about the early San Francisco / East Bay punk scene?**

Blag: We moved to SF in 1986 which maybe now seems like the "early SF punk scene." At the time, we were told that it was all over and we'd missed it. In my experience, the punk scene works best when well lubricated with sex and drugs, so

the Bay Area proved a great spot for us. Except Berkeley!

**AU: How did the Dwarves originally get started?**

Blag: We started in Illinois as a 60s garage band in the early 80s. We went to high school together and spent most of our time listening to records, chasing teenage girls and trying to stay high. Are you starting to see a pattern here?

**AU: Did the SF hippie vibe influence your early psychedelic years?**

Blag: No! We were psychedelic in the *Piper at the Gates of Dawn* sense, not the Hawkwind sense.

**AU: What makes the San Francisco punk scene unique?**

Blag: It's composed almost entirely of straight, white men who demonize straight, white men.

**AU: How do The Dwarves fit in chronologically to the East Bay timeline. Did you dominate the scene and rip it a new one?**

AU: We rarely played the East Bay, we almost always played SF. We got some love at MRR from the more adventurous folks there so we started playing Gilman Street early and did a lot of shows there. The average East Bay local was not a Dwarves fan, we inspired fear and loathing in large quantities. In SF, there was greater tolerance for our shenanigans, mainly because we got signed to Sub/Pop and suddenly found some legitimacy.

**AU: Do you know anything about the band from 1979 called The Mutants?**

Blag: No, but I think they played with the Cramps at that mental hospital near Sacramento. I could be wrong though.

**AU: Did you see the recent documentary *Turn It Around: The Story of East Bay Punk*? Were the Dwarves represented or was it more about Berkeley?**

Blag: I didn't see it, so I'm not sure if they mentioned us. My instinct says probably not, but I

## SAN FRANCISCO PUNK



Photo credit Miranda Termaat

bet some random poster or T-shirt had us on it.

**AU: Tell us some of the craziest things that have happened to you when on stage or on tour.**

Blag: I've spent 35 years getting paid to get my cock sucked and stay buzzed. I've been blessed!

**AU: Who else is currently in The Dwarves and what would it say on their Tinder profiles?**

Blag: HeWhoCanNotBeNamed- guitar-teen idol, sex symbol, icon.

Nick Oliveri aka Rex Everything- bass/vocal- violent psychopath, wordsmith, screamer, rock star.

Fresh Prince of Darkness- guitar- drug czar, comic genius, educator.

Hunter Down- drums- cute guy, decent criminal, MILF magnet.

**AU: What would it say on your Tinder profile?**

Blag: Blag the Ripper- vocal-egotistical bastard, perfectionist, asshole, legend.

**AU: What's the state of the current SF punk landscape?**

Blag: Moribund.

**AU: What are some past or present SF/East Bay bands that people should check out?**

Blag: All of them! Go out to a show tonight, support the scene!

**AU: Any plans to come tour Canada?**

Blag: Yes, 2019 is all about Canada, we

shall return!

**AU: Final words for Canadians fans?**

Blag: We love Canada, it's a lovely place full of attractive people with good intentions.

[www.thedwarves.com](http://www.thedwarves.com)



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West, is one member of team responsible for the shows. He helped found the Calgary show and took the time to answer some questions we had, particularly regarding how the Vancouver side event will grow in the future.

"Certainly having such a powerhouse team across North America (in Canada we have super talented people based in our two offices—Calgary and Toronto), means we have

the scale to dream big and do great things," said Foong.

Having the support from locals—be they entertainment celebrities or vendors to sell goods—a network of happy talents is important, too. The official statement is they are working on it and they couldn't offer specific details. This director notes growth just takes time.

"We certainly know Vancouver is a creative hotspot, so it's an exciting

place to be. Of course, we hope to continue to grow Fan Expo Vancouver each year. That means a variety of things: improving operationally for a consistently improving fan experience, hosting world class vendors/exhibitors and artists, and of course increasing attendance."

"[Our] goal is always to grow and get better, so we'll be looking at all the different ways we can do that—hopefully that involves evening events, because those are some of our favourite things to produce."

Fan Expo Vancouver 2018 attracted more than 25,000 fans. Foong knows not every show can



## Fan Expo Vancouver

By Ed Sum

Fan Expo Vancouver 2018 (FXV) took place from October 12th to 14th, and announced that their 2019 show will take place March 1st to 3rd. This series of all-ages pop culture expositions caters to everyone. The last event had other shows happening at the Vancouver Convention Center (SHUX, a gaming show and a private function), so perhaps that was one of the reasons behind the move. Finding a suitable time on the calendar is tough.

The team behind Fan Expo Canada, Calgary Expo, Edmonton Expo, Fan Expo Vancouver, Fan Expo Regina, MegaCon Orlando, MegaCon Tampa Bay, Fan Expo Boston, Toronto Comicon and Dallas Comic Con are doing the best they can to manage not only these many shows but also to keep everyone (vendors and attendees) happy.

Kandrix Foong, managing director of Fan Expo HQ



have everything fans want. They try however, and when it happens, some years come off as more memorable than others. I really enjoyed "A Night with Kevin Smith" a few years ago and fondly remember it.

The 2019 show will be held in the first weekend of March. Those curious can do a Google search and find events often taking place the same time across the country, making negotiations to get top talent for a specific weekend tough. To pick and choose which event is best for them all boils down to which event they enjoy being at more. John Barrowman is an entertainer, and sadly work commitments prevented him from returning this year. When he was a regular in The CW's *Arrow*, he was generally available for local conventions because he did not have to travel far.

Foong said, "We love our venue [The Vancouver Convention Center]. Hopefully by having a more reliable date in the convention calendar will support growth and let fans plan better."

At least, by my observance of this year's event, I thought cramming everything into one rental space is going to be a nightmare. Noise levels is always a concern. There were unused rooms on the main floor of the West building that the panels could have taken place, and I suspect they were deemed not big enough to host.

Having the photo ops booth next to the clubs

## COMIC-GEDDON

section on the main floor made for some unusual interaction. At the autograph tables, the flow was light and never packed. Modern pop artist Lights was in attendance for a few hours to meet fans and to autograph her latest comic book. No performance was offered, but the lineup for her was notably huge.

Kristy Swanson, the original Buffy the Vampire Slayer, was wonderfully entertaining. Amongst the line-up, convention regulars Felicia Day and Wil Wheaton were present; both always great to chat with. Of special significance was Ron Perlman and Lou Ferrigno. During their Q&As, they shared stories of working on set for half the time and answered questions from their fans for the second half.

Although this year's event felt small, it was still huge considering the turnout on Saturday.

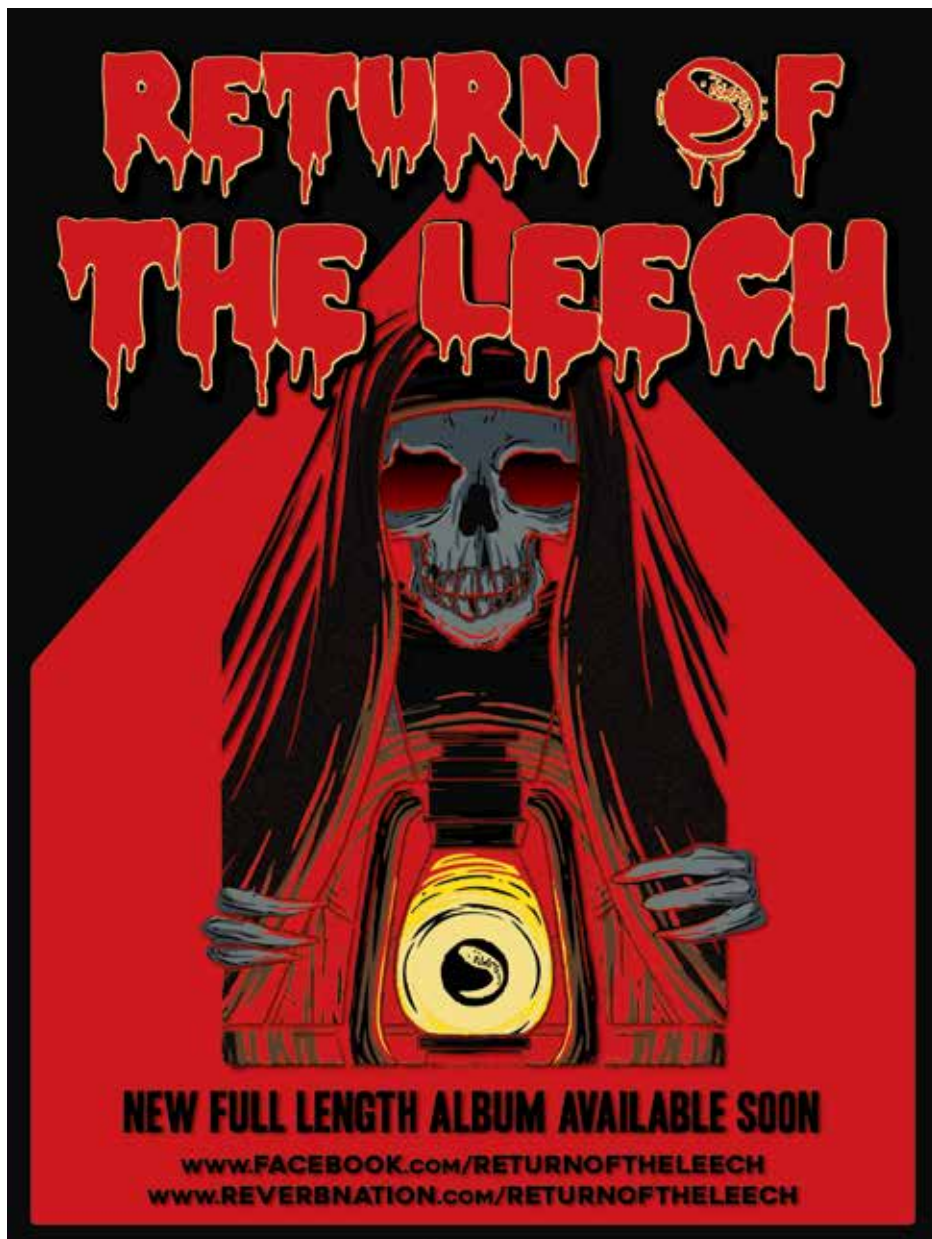
Although the month of March will be crowded because of Emerald City Comic Con in Seattle,

WA taking place mid-month, and Capital City in Victoria, BC later, Fan Expo Vancouver has the jump start as the first of three events.

Thoughts of a ten-year anniversary is not at the forefront of the team's planning at this point, but it soon will be, as they are approaching year eight. Even though one year's level of activity may not meet

expectations, another time can. "Of course we'd like to do something [big], and we'll start working on it when the time comes," said Foong.

[www.fanexpovancouver.com](http://www.fanexpovancouver.com)





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